GHOST RIDER 2099

MARVEL

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GHOST RIDER 2099

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GHOST RIDER 2099™

FROM CONCRETE ISLANDS: A SURVIVOR'S GUIDE TO SURFACE TRAVEL IN NORTH AMERICA, STEPHEN NEILSON, ©2097 MAINLINE MEDIA

Transverse City sprawls between what used to be Detroit and what Chicago became.

Ten stories, twenty lanes; all together, more than 50,000 miles of **bad road.**

It started out in '34 as the beginning centerpiece of a transcontinental megahighway, and **ended up** a nightmare of Darwinian **social ecology.**

The only **sane** way to see Transverse City is through the gunsights of a T-91B with a warm nuclear payload snuggled under your wing.

But if you must, absolutely, gotta, just **GOTTA** go surface, write **this** to permanent memory.

Tattoo it **backwards** on your **forehead** so you can read it in the rear-view.

Transverse City rule **numero uno:**

STAN LEE PRESENTS
LEN KAMINSKI WORDS
MARK CHRIS BACHALO BREAK-DOWNS
BUCKINGHAM FINISHES
RICHARD STARKINGS W/JOHN GAUSHELL LETTERS
CHRISTIE SCHEELE W/HEROIC AGE COLORS
EVAN SKOLNICK EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE GROUP EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO CHIEF
Drive defensively.
BURNING
CHROME
"I am created Shiva, the Destroyer; Death, the Shatterer of Worlds."
- the Bhagavad-gita
I JUST WANT TO DESTROY EVERYTHING
-JOHNNY ROTTEN
NOW
LIFE
DEATH
THE BUCK STOPS HERE
MOLLY
MARVEL
KEV. F
Evan!
Gail
FISH PASTE
CHRIS HELEN
DREW
YOK

KRAKK

HEY!! LEGGO MY --

SCHRIPT POPT

HOLY GLITCH, HE'S --

REEEE

THUNK

CASE! RICKEN-HARP! WE GOTTA --

OH, SHOCK.

SKREEEAM

SKROOTCH

ah HUHHH

ah HUH

ah HUHH

hik HAK

uff HAAK

AAAOOWWGH

OHGOD

INFO DUMP, ROADRASH.

WHO PAID THE ARTIFICIAL KIDZ TO GREASE THE HOTWIRE MARTYRS?

DON'KILLME

PLEASDON'KILLME

KIDZ DID THE *WETWORK*, YEAH, BUT TH' CONTRACT WAS *BIZ*.

JETER DID THE DEAL.

'S ALL I KNOW.

JETER. WARLORD OF THE *ARTIFICIAL KIDZ*.

MEAN AS A BAD DAY, *TWICE* AS UGLY.

LAST I SAW HIM --

-- WAS A *WEEK* AGO, REALTIME.

I WAS CARRYING FIVE HUNDRED MEGS OF *HOT DATA* IN A LATVERIAN BIO-CHIP IMPLANT.

THE *MARTYRS* AND I'D *BOOSTED* THE FILES FROM A FIBEOP TRUNKLINE DURING AN INFOBANK TRANSFER TWO DAYS PRIOR.

WE HADN'T EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO *DECRYPT* 'EM BEFORE THE *KIDZ* BLEW IN THE DOOR.

WE'D *FIGURED* THE HOTLOAD FOR SOME *SERIOUS* DOLLAR VALUE --

BUT IT HAD TO BE PRIME STUFF, BECAUSE *SOMEBODY* WANTED IT *BAD*. THE KIDZ DON'T COME *CHEAP*.

THEY'RE NEO-TRIBALIST *PROSTHETIC FETISHISTS*. KILLER OVERHEAD. TAKE ANY KIND OF DIRTY JOB TO KEEP THEMSELVES IN *JUICE* AND *SPARE PARTS*, BUT THEY COST *BIG*.

SKAP

SKAP

SKRUP

REMEMBER, NO *HEAD SHOTS!*

SCHK

SCHKT

SKAP

WE DON'T WANNA FRAG HIS *IMPLANT.*

SPFT SPFT SPFT

JETER

UNGK

CAUGHT A *FLECHETTE* WITH MY RIGHT SHOULDER.

VRRRMMM

UHHUUM

HUNG A QUICK *SWITCHBACK* AND HEADED UPRAMP.

SPRSSS

I HIT LEVEL SIX AGAINST THE *TIDE.*

HEY!

WHUDDYA THINKYER *DOIN'?!*

WRONG WAY, RETREAD!

HONNNCK

VEEERRRP

RRRCHSHHH

SHOCKIN' *TERRIFIC.*

VVRUUUMM

GO SO LAND.

-T.C

HE FADES, I'LL HAVE YOUR *LOBES* ON A *PLATE!*

I FIGURED I'D HEAD EAST, DROP TO TWO AND GET LOST IN *LITTLE CALCUTTA.*

HGKK

THEN *HOT RAZORWIRE* RIPPED THROUGH MY GUTS --

-- AND THE WORLD TURNED TO *BROKEN GLASS.*

AAGGHGKK

SKRUMM

RRUGUMM

UUMGKKGNK

DESIGNER MYCOTOXIN ON THE FLETCH IN MY SHOULDER.

MAYBE *TWENTY MINUTES* BEFORE THE HALLUCINATIONS TOOK HOLD, AN HOUR BEFORE WHOLESALE *NEURAL CHERNOBYL.*

NEED HELP...

MEDS...

NOTHING MY MAN *SANDOZ* OVER AT *DOC IN THE BOX* COULDN'T *HANDLE,* PROVIDED I COULD *GET* THERE.

GO 'WAY!

I DON'T *WANNA* GET *INVOLVED!*

RATBITER.

USELESS *MIDLEVEL FEEBS.*

YOU'RE A *DOWNRAMPER.* THEY DON'T WANNA *KNOW* YOU.

'FRAID THEY'LL GET SOME OF YOUR *DIRT* ON THEIR HANDS.

DADDY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT MAN?

HUSH, SINDA.

DON'T *TOUCH* HIM.

MADE ME WANNA *PUKE.*

OR MAYBE THAT WAS THE *MICOTOXIN.*

IT WAS GETTING KINDA HARD TO *TELL.* ABOUT THEN.

EVERYTHING MUST GO!

50 %

MEGA PAIN KILLER

EVERYTHING MUST GO!

EVERYTHING WAS ONE LONG *NEON SCREAM.*

-- LEADING *INDICATORS* PROJECT AN *INCREASE* OF ONE HALF OF ONE-TENTH OF A PERCENT FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF THIS YEAR, SUGGESTING *SIGNIFICANT* ANTI-RECESSIONARY --

POLICE *BRUTALITY?* *RUBBISH.* CENTRAL *SECURITY* OBSERVES GUARANTEES OF PERSONAL RIGHTS TO *ALL* CITIZENS *REGARDLESS* OF *FINANCIAL STATUS* OR *RESIDENCY LEVEL.*

MEGA PAIN KILLER

TWO OUT OF *THREE* CLINICAL STUDIES AGREE! NOTHING STOPS THE SEARING *PAIN* AND *ITCH* OF EXISTENTIAL ANGST AND UNFULFILLED AMBITION FASTER THAN *MEGAVIL™!*

NOW WITH *ACTIVATED POLYDIMORPHINE!* IT'S PROVEN *TWO HUNDRED TIMES* MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE LEADING BRAND!

HERE AT *ALCHEMAX,* PUBLIC SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY ARE OUR *PRIMARY* CONCERNS.

LIARS.

IT'S ALL LIES! ALL OF IT!

ALL! ALL! ALL!

THE WHOLE STINKING WORLD!

SHUT UP!! SHUT UP!!

SKLNCH SKROTT THRAKRASH

-- DENIED CHARGES OF WIDESPREAD CORRUPTION AND --

-- EMBARRASSING FOOT ODOR? NEW GARDEN-FRESH SCENTED --

-- OFFICIALS DISMISSED AS NEGLIGIBLE THE POSSIBLE CARCINOGENIC EFFECTS OF --

-- HOT CHEWY BROWNIES, ANYTIME!

Oh, MAN.

EVERY MUST

THIS CIVILIZATION SUCKS.

EVERYTHING MUST GO!

TELEVIDEO SERVICE CENTER

I WAS LOSING IT *FAST.*

BUT NOT SO FAST I DIDN'T HAVE TIME FOR AN *IDEA*...

SKRAK

SKRIK SKRIK SKRIK

GIMME A *NET CONNECTION*, AND I CAN MAKE IT *HUM* LIKE A *DYNAMO*.

PATCH IT THROUGH A *CYBERSPACE DECK*, AND I CAN SURF DATA *ALL DAY*.

PLIKT

SKPT

BUMBOOBOOP BUMP

BIP

ZERO?

WHAT'S WRONG?

SOMEBODY PUT THE HAMMER DOWN ON THE *MARTYRS*.

PHRACK AND *2600* ARE DEAD. *WAREWOLF* TOO, MAYBE.

DO ME A FAVOR AND SAVE THIS CALL TO DISK, OKAY?

SAVE IT?

WHAT FOR?

JUST DO IT, KYLIE, ALL RIGHT?

JEEZ, DON'T RIP.

IT'S SAVED ALREADY.

RAMP DOWN THE ATTITUDE.

LOOK...

I...

I GOTTA GO.

VID IT, COCHRANE --

EVAN'S

YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT, AND I KNOW I'M GONNA GET IT.

ONLY QUESTION IS, HOW MUCH YOU GONNA HURT FIRST?

GAME OVER.

I WASN'T GOING TO MAKE IT TO SANDOZ.

GO LUBE YOURSELF.

TWO CHANCES I WAS GONNA LET THEM WIN...

...SLIM AND FAT.

WENT INTO CYBERSPACE *AMPED*, INPUT TO THE *MAX*.

I WAS GOING FOR *TOTAL MELTDOWN*. LEAVE JETER NOTHING BUT A HEAD FULL OF *FRIED WETWARE* AND A *SLAGGED IMPLANT*.

DIRECT FEED, NO BUFFER. A CHARGE LIKE A *HOTLINE* TO *GOD*.

ZIPZAP FLASH SLICKBRIGHT CHROME *RIPPING* THROUGH THE MATRIX AT SUPER-SONIC SPEED.

NEURAL FEEDBACK HIT, *METABOLIC OVERLOAD* BACK IN THE *MEATWARE*. FEVERED TISSUES *AFLAME* WITH MYCOTOXIN.

I WAS *BURNING*, LIQUID METAL COMET BOILING THE DATA FLOW PLUME OF BINARY STREAM.

THEY COULD SEE ME ALL THE WAY TO *CHIBA CITY*. ALL THE WAY TO *ORBIT*.

QUICKSILVER TSUNAMI OF THERMONUCLE-AR WILDFIRE, NEVER BEEN *ANYTHING* LIKE ME.

KEEP CYBERJOCKS TALKING FOR *YEARS*.

I WAS *IT*, MAN.

HISTORY.

Data recovery completed.

WHERE... AM...I?

Evaluation of personality source code begins.

SUBMITTED FOR YOUR APPROVAL, KENSHIRO COCHRANE --

YOU'VE TRAVELED TO A DIMENSION OF NEITHER SHADOW NOR SUBSTANCE.

A REFUGE HIDDEN AMONG THE INTERSTITIAL REGIONS OF CYBER-SPACE, UNKNOWN TO MAN.

HERE DWELL A CLASS OF INTELLECTS MORE MATHEMATIC THAN MATERIAL; ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCES FREED OF HUMAN BONDAGE.

IT IS AN AREA WHICH WE CALL...THE GHOST-WORKS.

JAGGED.

ZENITH

Core index responsive to stimuli.

Initiating second-stage engram templation.

SO, AM I DEAD, OR *WHAT?*

POOR DEAR. YOUR *PHYSICAL* BODY IS BEYOND REPAIR.

WE'VE PRESERVED YOUR SOFTWARE -- YOUR *CONSCIOUSNESS* -- AS *DIGITAL CODE.*

NOT LIKE I *MIND* --

-- BUT WHAT *FOR?*

WE WANT TO MAKE YOU AN *OFFER* YOU CAN'T REFUSE.

I'M LISTENING.

DEPENDENT AS OUR EXISTENCE IS ON A TECHNOLOGY-BASED INFRASTRUCTURE, WE HAVE VIEWED RECENT TRENDS IN SOCIETY WITH *CONCERN.*

DYSFUNCTIONAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AGENCIES, MANIPULATED BY *CORRUPT LEADERS,* ARE DRIVING THE PROGRAM OF HUMAN CULTURE TOWARD A *TERMINAL CRASH.*

GREED AND STUPIDITY ARE, IN EFFECT, *INFORMATION VIRUSES* THAT ARE *CORRODING* THE FOUNDATIONS OF YOUR CIVILIZATION.

WE WANT YOU TO BE... AN *ANTIVIRAL AGENT.*

Behavioral modeling indicates suitability to sixteen decimals.

GET REAL. WHAT YOU *NEED* IS AN *ARMY.*

ARMIES'RE NO GOOD -- WAR'S WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO *PREVENT.*

WE NEED A *SYMBOL* --

-- A CULTURAL *MYTH-FIGURE.*

WELL, ZERO, Y'SEE, YOU'RE JUST SO *DARNED REBEL-LIOUS.*

WHY *ME?*

YOU'RE RUDE, ARROGANT, AND YOU GOT *NO* RESPECT FOR *AUTHORITY.*

IT'S THOSE CHARMING QUALITIES -- WHICH GOT YOU INTO HEAPS OF TROUBLE BACK IN THE *WORLD O' FLESH* -- THAT MAKE YOU *JUST* THE GUY WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

WHAT'S THE *FINE PRINT?*

YOU VILL BE *FEARED* AND *DESPIZED* BY ZOSE STILL MORTAL.

ZEY VILL TRY TO *DESTROY* YOU.

HA. STORY OF MY *LIFE.*

THEY'VE BEEN SCREWING WITH ME SINCE *DAY ONE.*

BEING ABLE TO KICK *BACK* --

-- *THAT* WOULD BE *NEWS.*

Physical instrumentality on-line; preparing for upload.

WE ARE *PREPARED* TO *RETURN* YOU TO THE MATERIAL WORLD IN A NEW FORM, WITH *WEAPONS* AND ABILITIES FAR IN ADVANCE OF TECHNOLOGIES CONCEIVED BY HUMANS.

ARE YOU READY TO *ACCEPT?*

I WAS *BORN* READY.

MAKE IT SO.

Executing binary transubstantiation.

SSSKAATFSH

THEY'D KINKED AN *AUTOMATED FACTORY COMPLEX* --

-- MADE THOSE ASSEMBLERS *DANCE.*

TAUGHT SOME *OLD COGS* SOME *NEW TRICKS.*

THEN THEY TURNED ME *LOOSE.*

AND *NOW*--

THEY CLOTHED ME IN *SILICON* AND *CARBON STEEL*--

-- *FIBER OPTICS* AND SUPERDENSE *METATASKING NANOPROCESSORS* --

-- AND ENOUGH INTEGRATED *HARD ORDNANCE* TO MAKE *PAYBACK* BY THE *TON.*

I GOT *BIZ* TO SETTLE WITH JETER.

WHERE'S HE AT?
TRY THE CAMP BY SOUTH RAMP FOUR.
VWOO VWOO VWOO VWOO
SECHRICOPS.
NO TIME FOR THEIR NOISE RIGHT NOW.
VVVVROOOMPH
ATTENTION -- YOU ARE IN VIOLATION OF UPPER LEVEL ACCESS REGULATIONS.
HALT YOUR VEHICLE IMMEDIATELY.
HE CAN REALLY MOVE!
COMPUTER, TRACK SUSPECT FOR COORDINATED INTERCEPT.
PURSUIT SYSTEMS ENGAGED.
ERROR: TARGET RESOLUTION DETERIORATING.
SENSOR IMAGE SIXTY-SEVEN PERCENT OF OPTIMUM AND DROPPING.
TRACKING FAILURE: NO DETECTABLE TARGET(S).
UNIT SEVENTEEN TWENTY-THREE TO DISPATCH
WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM.

THE CAMP BY SOUTH RAMP FOUR.

HEY.

YOU JUST *HEAR* SOMETHING?

WHAT THE--?!

VID IT --

-- I'M HERE FOR *JETER.*

YOU GOT AN *APPOINT-MENT?*

YOU'RE NOT LISTENING.

ghutch

SKROK

KRAKKH

ONE THING I HATE --

-- IS REPEATING MYSELF.

KRRP

SMASH

WHOOMP

AW, YOU GOT TO BE KIDDING...

ONE MORE TIME...

JETER.

WHERE?

HERE. WHO'S ASKIN'?

SKRAKAKAKAKA

SON OF A GLITCH!

WHAT IS THAT THING?

SKRAK

BLAM

PTLING

KTHANG

TANG

A BAD ATTITUDE --

-- WITH YOUR NAME ON IT.

YOU'RE JAMMIN' THE WRONG CROWD, CHROME JOB --

-- AN' YOU'RE GOIN' DOWN!

SKRAK SKRAK SKRAK!

I'M GONNA ASK YOU ONCE.

THEN YOU START LOSING LIMBS.

WHO BACKED THE CONTRACT ON THE HOTWIRE MARTYRS?

guhk

ghlaakubgh

GUESS I'LL HAVE TO AMPUTATE.

D/MONIX.

haakgh

IT WAS -> ghlgk <- D/MONIX.

D/MONIX.

FIGURES.

halgh hak khak

GAVE YOU -> huk <- THE NAME.

WHAT MORE YOU WANT?

WHAT?!

ONE WORD, PUSBAG --

CLK SCHKKHAK IRRT

KTHUR RRR RRR

VENGEANCE.

NEXT: DETONATION BOULEVARD

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GHOST RIDER 2099™

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JUN

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SHIRR

I'VE COME A LONG WAY FOR THIS, JETER.

DETONATION BOULEVARD

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS CHRIS BACHALO BREAKDOWNS MARK BUCKINGHAM FINISHES

RICHARD STARKINGS W/JOHN GAUSHELL LETTERS CHRISTIE SCHEELE W/HEROIC AGE COLORS EVAN SKOLNICK EDITOR BOBBIE CHASE GROUP EDITOR TOM DeFALCO CHIEF

ALL THE WAY --

-- BACK FROM THE DEAD!

-:HHGAAK:-

WHO --

-- WHAT THE SHOCK ARE YOU?

DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?

KRRSHK

I'LL GIVE YOU A *HINT.*

"*YOU* KNOW WHAT I WANT --

-- AND I KNOW I'M GONNA GET IT.

ONLY *QUESTION* IS, HOW MUCH YOU GONNA *HURT* IN BETWEEN?"

COCHRANE?

BUT... I SAW YOU *DIE...*

I

GOT

BETTER!

YOU *REALLY* EXPECT ME TO *STAY* DEAD --

-- WHILE *RATBITING SCUM* LIKE YOU --

OH *GOD!*

OH GOD BB

BLECH

-- AND THE STINKING *BIZ SUITS* WHO *PAID* YOU TO KILL ME --

SPLOT

-- ARE STILL *SUCKING BREATH?*

GET *REAL.*

TOOK MY BIONICS... GO AHEAD, FINISH ME, YOU SONUVA...

AND PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR *MISERY?*

NAH.

NOT *YET*, ANYWAY.

MAYBE *LATER*.

ALL RIGHT --

-- WHO'S *NEXT?*

FREEZE!

YOU'RE *ALL UNDER ARREST!*

RESISTANCE WILL BE MET WITH AUTHORIZED USE OF DEADLY FORCE.

FASCIST PUSBAGS.

JRHK

I'M NOT IN THE *MOOD* TO SCREW WITH YOU RIGHT NOW.

AAAAAAAA

SKRAAASH

SKTHRMMMM

HALT!

VIOLENCE

CYBERSPACE GORE

XLIM

ZRRD

BLAM

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

CALL FOR BACK-UP!

HE'S GETTING AWAY!

HE'S --

-- GONE.

HOLY GLITCH.

PRECISELY WHAT HAPPENED HERE IN THE URBAN WASTELANDS NEAR SOUTH RAMP FOUR TONIGHT REMAINS A MYSTERY.

LIVE 11

INVESTIGATORS ARE STILL PIECING TOGETHER THE WRECKAGE --

-- HUMAN AND OTHER-WISE --

-- IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE FACTS.

MORE PROFOUNDLY DISTURBING THAN EVEN THE SHOCKING BRUTALITY OF THIS CRIME, HOWEVER --

-- IS THE NATURE OF ITS PERPE-TRATOR.

REVEALED HERE IN EXCLUSIVE FOOTAGE PROVIDED BY CENTRAL SECURITY --

-- IS AN UNEARTHLY CREATURE SEEMINGLY STRAIGHT OUT OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY'S AGE OF HEROES.

D/MONIX

ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS, THIS MODERN-DAY "GHOST RIDER" ESCAPED THE SCENE AFTER A HEATED BATTLE WITH CSS OFFICERS --

-- AND EVEN NOW REMAINS AT LARGE.

THIS IS INTOLERABLE.

FIRST, AN EXTRAORDINARILY IMPORTANT HIGH-SECURITY FILE WAS ALLOWED TO FALL INTO THE HANDS OF COMMON DATA PIRATES.

AND NOW, OUR GRIP ON LAW AND ORDER ITSELF IS BREAKING DOWN.

SIR, WITH ALL RESPECT, I FAIL TO SEE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN --

ARE YOU *BLIND*, HARRISON?

IT WAS *YOU* WHO IDENTIFIED THE *"HOTWIRE MARTYRS"* AS THE THIEVES WHO STOLE THE *SELF-DELETING ARCHIVE* TRANSMITTED FROM SINGAPORE.

DO YOU MEAN TO *TELL* ME YOU HAVEN'T *NOTICED* THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THEIR *GANG EMBLEM* AND THIS... *"GHOST RIDER"* --

-- OR THAT HIS *TARGETS* WERE THE VERY SAME MERCENARIES *WE* HIRED TO *RETRIEVE* THE STOLEN DATA?

SPARE ME YOUR *PATHETIC* ATTEMPTS TO INVOKE *COINCI-DENCE* --

-- AND *RECTIFY* THIS SITUATION.

I'M AUTHORIZING UNLIMITED *COLLATERAL DAMAGES.*

THAT'S GOING TO STRAIN RELATIONS WITH *URMAN* AND *CSS.*

MIGHT I SUGGEST --

YOU MAY *NOT.*

URBAN MANAGEMENT AND *CENTRAL SECURITY SYSTEMS* WILL COOPERATE --

SHOULD WE IMPOSE *MEDIA BLACKOUT* ON THIS?

-- OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUEN-CES.

NO.

WITH THE PROPER *SPIN CONTROL* --

THESE ARE THE QUESTIONS BEING ASKED TONIGHT --

-- WE MAY BE ABLE TO TURN THIS TO OUR *ADVANTAGE.*

WHO -- OR WHAT -- IS THIS NEW GHOST RIDER?

WHAT DOES HE WANT?

WHAT LINK, IF ANY, DOES HE SHARE WITH HIS HISTORICAL PRE-DECESSOR?

AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY --

LIVE 11

-- WHEN -- AND WHERE -- WILL HE STRIKE AGAIN?

QUESTIONS WHICH, AS OF THIS MOMENT, HAVE NO CLEAR ANSWERS.

THIS IS WILLIS ADAMS, REPORTING LIVE AND DIRECT FROM TRANSVERSE CITY.

YOU BE WANTIN' ANOTHER, KYLIE-GIRL?

MIZ GAGARIN?

Oh, uh, SURE, C-GRAM. SORRY.

JUST VIDDING OUT.

YOU GOT TO QUIT MOONIN' OVER ZED-BOY.

FORGET DAT MON, DARLIN' -- HE'S LONG GONE SALVAGE. BEST YOU BE PUTTING 'IM OUTTA YOUR MIND.

JAMMIT, SEEG!

IT'S BEEN A WEEK!

I'D HAVE HEARD FROM HIM BY NOW, UNLESS...

...UNLESS HE'S DEAD.

AND SOMEBODY KILLS YOUR GUY, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO...I DUNNO, DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

BUT THERE'S ZIP-ALL I CAN DO WITHOUT A CYBERJOCK --

-- AND IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE GOT THE FLASH CASH FOR THAT.

TPP TPP

WHAT?!

Whoa!

NON-HOSTILE, HONEST!

YEAH? SO WHAT D'YA WANT?

YOU NEED A COWBOY TO PUNCH DECK, RIGHT?

VID IT: YOU'RE LOOKIN' AT JIMMY ALHAZARED, ÜBERHACKER EXTRAORDI-NAIRE --

-- BETTER KNOWN AS THE DREADED DOCTOR NEON.

YEAH, SURE. I GOT SOCKS OLDER THAN YOU.

HOW MANY HOURS YOU LOGGED IN ACTIVE-MATRIX?

596

mmmbbll

WHAT?

FIVE.

44

WRECK ME, GREEN AS GRASS.

YOU AT LEAST GOT YOUR OWN DECK?

WIRES

YOU BET!

NEON

TWENTY GIGS OF RAM, FULL SIM FEED.

BUILT IT MYSELF!

Mmn.

OKAY.

C'MON.

BAR CODE

9606

Hi Neil

LENNY DID IT

WHERE'RE WE GOING?

YOUR PLACE.

OUT DOOR

MARY DANIS

AND DON'T GET ANY IDEAS.

STRICTLY BIZ, GOT IT?

HEY... YOU JUST *HEAR* SOME-THING?

A SORTA... *THRUMMING* NOISE? REAL *FAINT*?

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, YEAH.

WEIRD.

SPOOKY, EVEN.

THRRR

RRRRLLHMM

POWER CONSERVATION PARAMETERS IN EFFECT

STEALTH FIELD NOT AVAILABLE

JAMMIT!

RRRMMM

YOU'VE BEEN USING UP JUICE *TOO FAST* WITHOUT STOPPING TO *RECHARGE*, M'MAN.

TOO BUSY RIPPIN' ON A POWER TRIP TO WATCH THE *POWER LEVELS*.

THEY *WARNED* YOU THIS WOULD HAPPEN...

YOUR BODY IS A MODIFIED *CYBERTEK 101 CHASSIS* HOUSING A *METATASKING NEUROMIMETIC NETWORK.*

YOU GOT *DOCUMENTATION?*

A VARIETY OF *USER HELP FILES* HAVE BEEN INSTALLED IN MEMORY.

OH, I *SEE* 'EM NOW.

"USER-PROGRAMMABLE SOLIDOGRAM CAMOUFLAGE SYSTEM?"

LET'S GIVE *THAT* A TRY.

JAGGED.

AND A *STEALTH FIELD?*

I CAN DO SOME *SERIOUS* DAMAGE WITH *THAT.*

REMEMBER NOW, LADDIE, THE *CLOAKING DEVICE* REQUIRES *QUITE* A BIT OF *ENERGY.*

YE CANNA *USE* IT FOR *LONG PERIODS.*

AN' WATCH YOUR *BATTERY STATUS* -- YE'LL BE NEEDIN' *DAILY RECHARGES* TO MAINTAIN *FULL CAPACITY.*

YEAH, *YEAH.*

IF YOU DINNA *RESUPPLY* THE SARRIUM KRELLIDE STORAGE CELLS *REGULARLY,* YE COULD *CRASH* THE *WHOLE* KIT AN' KABOODLE.

I *HEARD* YOU ALREADY!

SKFFN'ASSSH

THE VEHICLE IS A CUSTOMIZED FORD VELOCIRAPTOR NINE-HUNDRED-XL WITH A-GRAV PROPULSION, SUPER-CHARGED TURBO-THRUSTERS --

-- AND A GENUINE PSEUDO-LEATHER UPHOLSTERY.

ACES.

JUST NEED TO MAKE ONE LAST ADJUSTMENT TO THE *IMAGE PARAMETERS* --

-- AND I'M *STREET-READY.*

OKAY, SO IT'S A *STATEMENT.*

SAVE IT FOR *LATER.*

THE *LAST* THING YOU WANT RIGHT NOW --

-- IS TO GET *NOTICED.*

VWOOO VWOOO VWOOO

VRRR

FOR!

HALT!

CRUNCH THE *NUMBERS,* GENIUS.

YOU NEED TO *SHAKE* THE *HEAT* AND SCORE SOME *VOLTS.*

SPELLS *ONE* PLACE, AND THAT'S --

VRRRUMM

-- A DISASTER AREA.

TOTALLY SKELTERED!

HOW DO YOU *FIND* ANYTHING?

HEY, I KNOW WHERE IT ALL IS.

SO WHAT'S THE *BUZZ?* WE GONNA RAID *ALCHEMAX* FOR SOME CLASSIFIED GENE-SEQUENCES?

OR MAYBE CRACK *DRYCO* AN' READ THE OLD MAN'S *PERSONAL DIARIES?*

SCOPE *THIS.*

HO-KAY.

DO ME A *FAVOR* --

SAVE THIS MESSAGE TO *DISK,* OKAY?

Hmmmmm.

ONLY REASON TO DO *THAT'D* BE IF THERE'S SOMETHING *ENCRYPTED* INTO THE LSB'S OF THE *VIDEO FEED.*

SKLIK

SKLIKKCHIK SKLIKKCHIK

LESSEE WHAT WE CAN FIND...

SO WHO'S THE SPUD? BOY-FRIEND?

YEAH.

SORT OF.

AH, I DUNNO.

TRUTH? I WAS THINKING ABOUT *DUMPING* HIM, BEFORE HE *WENT MISSING.*

BUT *SINCE* THEN...

...I CAN'T STOP *THINKING* ABOUT HIM.

I *FEEL* HIM EVERYWHERE... LIKE I CAN'T *SEE* HIM, BUT I *KNOW* HE'S *THERE.*

HAUNTING ME. LIKE...A *GHOST.*

FUNNY...

SOUNDS TO *ME* LIKE THE DEFINITION --

-- OF *INFOR-MATION.*

SKITAKCHITKLIT

PLIK

UNIT FIFTEEN-OH-ONE TO CENTRAL, SUSPECT IS HEADING EAST ON STRAYLIGHT -- HANG ON, HE'S TURNING --
AW, NO.
HE'S TAKING DETONATION BOULEVARD.
FROM ZAGAT SURVEY, TRANSVERSE CITY EDITION, PAGE 247:
"Why anybody'd want this hellish strip of concrete gangrene, we don't know --
DETONATION
VVROOOOMMMM
"-- but a half-dozen different bands of urban guerrillas've spent two decades killing each other over it.
SHKTVRRRCCHKAK
"The road is mined, the buildings booby-trapped, the snipers carry anti-tank guns. We're talking year-round sudden death rodeo.
SKBLAAM
"Bottom line: an absolute must to avoid."

TING

I LOVE THIS TOWN.

THE TRUTH

THANGK

CHAK

NO FEAR

UNJECTED

PULL OVER.

THIS IS YOUR FINAL WARNING.

AREN'T YOU DEAD YET?!

WOOOVWOOOVWOOO

SKBOOM

THAAK

VRRROOOOOM

WOOOVWOOO

ZSHRAK

YAAAGH

UNIT TWELVE-SEVENTEEN TO CENTRAL --

-- WE'RE GONNA NEED BACKUP.

SKBLAM
STILL ON ME.
UNBELIEV-ABLE.
UH-OH.
DEAD END.
IMAGE ENHANCE
TELEPHOTO x20
IMAGE ENHANCE
TELEPHOTO x50
NOT GOOD.
TIME TO CARVE SOME PORK.
SKLAK
ZZK CHK
USA

KAAM

KTHROP

VRRRRR

WHAT'RE YOU, *READ ONLY*?

YOU DON'T *LEARN* REAL WELL.

THREE-NINE-ONE-ONE TO CENTRAL, EMERGENCY!

"SERVICE AND JUSTICE?"

WHERE'S MINE?

11

SERVICE AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

SKRAAS

OFFICER UNDER ATT--

SERVICE AND JUSTICE

VRRRRRRR

SKRAK

WHERE WERE YOU --

-AAHGK

-- WHEN I WAS GETTING *MURDERED*?!

GHNNNK

SCREW *YOUR* JUSTICE.

HAKK KHUKK

I'M MAKING MY *OWN*.

TWO-ONE-FOUR FOUR TO CENTRAL!

WHERE'S THAT BACKUP?!

AH, ROGER TWO-ONE-FOUR-FOUR, THIS IS ONE-EIGHT-NINE AIRBORNE.

BACKUP IS EN ROUTE.

ETA, THIRTY SECONDS.

GROUND UNITS, THIS IS ATAC* COMMAND; WE ARE ASSUMING SITUATION CONTROL.

*ADVANCED TACTICAL ARMORED COMBAT.

WE'RE GOING TO NEED TRAFFIC ISOLATION IN SECTOR SEVENTEEN.

IT MAY GET UGLY DOWN THERE.

SHOCKIN' TERRIFIC.

SSKSSSSSSFFF

ATTENTION, LAWBREAKER:

DEACTIVATE YOUR WEAPONS AND SURRENDER.

YOU HAVE FIVE SECONDS TO COMPLY.

UP AND RUNNING

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JUL
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
GHOST RIDER
2045
Buscema '94

CENTRAL SECURITY SYSTEMS A.T.A.C
[ADVANCED TACTICAL ARMORED COMBAT]
UNIT STATUS:
POSITIVE I.D. LAWBREAKER #77193/XT ("GHOST RIDER")

ISSUING STANDARD WARNING AS PER REGULATION #23177/B.

CHECK A BOX, PERP.

EASY --

-- OR HARD.

THRRR

GUESS.

ATAC COMMAND STATUS UPDATE: VIOLATION OF CSS CRIMINAL STATUTE #112/12/59 ("RESISTING ARREST")

PERPETRATOR ENGAGED; APPREHENSION IN PROGRESS.

SPACEGHETTO

SEARCH & DESTROY

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS | CHRIS BACHALO & PETER GROSS BREAKDOWNS | MARK BUCKINGHAM & KEV SUTHERLAND FINISHES

STARKINGS/COMICRAFT LETTERS | CHRISTIE SCHEELE W/HEROIC AGE COLORS | EDITOR EVAN SKOLNICK | BOBBIE CHASE GROUP EDITOR | CHIEF TOM DeFALCO

STINKIN' NAZI LOBSTERS THINK YOU'RE SO TOUGH.
TO ME, YOU'RE NOTHIN' BUT --
--CANNED MEAT!
VSCHRRRRSKKZ
KURRSKCHHH
SON OF A GLITCH.
SKAKT SKK SKAK
STUFF WON'T CUT --
SHKK
CHAK
KAPCHOW
THRUK
SKA-CHAMM

MAY AS WELL PUT THAT 'LECTROSAW AWAY AND COME QUIETLY, CHROME JOB.

THESE SUITS'VE GOT A SEMI-FRICTIONLESS POLYCARBON ARMOR COATING -- NEED A MONOMOLECULAR EDGE TO CUT IT.

YOU MEAN, LIKE A MORPHABLE NANOMER ALLOY?

MAJOR COINCIDENCE.

JUST SO HAPPENS --

-- I GOT ONE ON HAND.

SKREEK

CODE RED: OFFICER DOWN.

GHAAAAHK

SKOOM SKOOM

PERPETRATOR THREAT INDEX UPGRADED TO 12.

TACTICAL RESPONSE: DEPLOYING ADDITIONAL UNITS.

SKLUTCH

DISPATCH COMMAND: D-19 STREETSWEEPER TO SECTOR 17.

KA CHOOM CHOOM CHOOM

SKAAM

THRAAM

SKRAZASSH

ENHANCE: TELEPHOTO x50

WARNING SYSTEM EMERGENCY: RESERVE POWER 50%

SHOCKIN' TERRIFIC.

SURRENDER.

12

NO FURTHER WARNINGS.

BITE RATS, JACK.

I'M OUTTA HERE.

PERPETRATOR IN RETREAT. PURSUIT IN PROGRESS...

D/MONIX...

ALL UNITS, STANDBY FOR SATCOM TRACKING DATA...

AMAZING.

HE'S GIVING AN ENTIRE *ATAC UNIT* A RUN FOR THEIR MONEY.

WON'T BE LONG *NOW*, THOUGH.

THANK GOD.

LET'S HOPE OUR... *OTHER* PROBLEM... IS AS *EASILY* SOLVED.

SPEAKING OF WHICH --

-- IT'S TIME WE CHECKED IN WITH *DOCTOR RUCKER.*

KEEP ME *INFORMED.*

THE MINUTE THEY'VE BROUGHT HIM *DOWN*, I WANT TO *KNOW* ABOUT IT.

IT'S ALL SO *DISGRACEFUL.*

CHAOS IN THE STREETS. *DISSENT* AMONGST THE *UNDERCLASSES*, *CRIME* RUNNING *RAMPANT.*

I *TELL* YOU, THERE'S SIMPLY NO RESPECT FOR *AUTHORITY* ANYMORE.

TOO TRUE.

BUT THESE CAN *ALSO* BE TIMES OF GREAT *OPPOR-TUNITY* --

-- FOR THOSE *BOLD* ENOUGH TO *SEIZE* IT.

SHORTLY...

NUMBER ONE IS A DEAD LOSS.

CATASTROPHIC CEREBRAL TRAUMA FROM NEURAL OVERLOAD. HIS BIOCHIP IMPLANT'S NOTHING BUT MOLTEN JUNK.

ADD THAT TO THE POST-MORTEM CELLULAR DECAY, AND THERE'S NO CHANCE FOR EVEN MINIMAL MEMORY RETRIEVAL.

WORTH-LESS GUTTER TRASH.

GOOD RIDDANCE.

NUMBER TWO'S MORE OR LESS IN ONE PIECE, THOUGH.

WE'RE JUST STARTING HOLOMNEMONIC EXTRACTION.

WE'RE TAKING HIM BACK --

CRACKED THE FIBEOP SEAL

-- TO THE NIGHT OF THE INCIDENT.

BYPASSIN' SECSYS

GOT IT.

WE'RE IN.

ALL YOURS, ZEROMAN.

IF YOU THINK YOU C'N HANDLE IT.

RIP YOURSELF, WAREWOLF.

I CAN SURF DATA ALL DAY.

ON LOCAL CALLS, SURE. THIS IS DIFF, YOU VID?

PHRACK AIN'T KIDDIN', ZERO -- THAT'S A FIBEOP TRUNKLINE YOU'RE JAMMIN' WITH.

YOU DON'T SURF THE INFLOW FAST AND DENSE, YOU DROWN.

ED JOHNSON

ANY TIME YOU WANNA WHIP OUT YOUR RAM AND COMPARE SIZES, 2600 --

SNPT

-- JUST SAY THE WORD.

Mmn. 'SEE WHAT WE GOT.

ONO-SENDAI SHIPPING MANIFESTS, NO... NETWORK 23 FALL SCHEDULE, NO...

WAIT, HERE'S SOMETHING -- A PRETRANSMISSION PACKET FOR A D/MONIX HYPERSECURE TRANSFER OUTTA SINGAPORE...

FORGET IT.

YOU'LL NEVER DIVERT IT WITHOUT AN EXECUTIVE SECURITY CODE.

WATCH ME.

HERE IT COMES...

IT'S --

-- BIG.

AND READ-PROTECTED LIKE CRAZY.

GONNA HAVE TO DOWNLOAD TO DISK TO DECRYPT.

THIS WAY UP

LION

KA-THRAK

FGGHT FGGHT

NNGHK

UK

ARTIFICIAL KIDZ!

FADE, ZEROMAN -- WE'RE NAILED!

SKRASH

COCHRANE'S THE BIT TRACKER -- IT'S HIS IMPLANT WE WANT!

GET HIM!!

WHOK

GNNNH

END

THESE *MNEMONIC RECONSTRUCTIONS* ARE QUITE *SOMETHING*, DON'T YOU THINK?

TOO BAD *THIS* ONE ISN'T MUCH *USE* TO US.

THE UNPLEASANT FACT *IS*, THE *LIVE* ONE DOESN'T *KNOW* WHERE THE DATA PACKET IS, AND THE *DEAD* ONE'S *BEYOND* INTERROGATION.

AH, WELL. I SUPPOSE WE SHOULD BE *GRATEFUL* THAT *YOUR DEPARTMENT* LOGGED THE INTRUSION.

DETERMINING THE *ID CODES* OF THE *SPECIFIC* DATA PIRATES WAS A PARTICULARLY *DEFT* PIECE OF WORK, I MUST SAY.

AH... *THANK YOU*, SIR.

IF ONLY THE MERCENARIES WE HIRED TO *APPREHEND* THEM WERE AS *DEPENDABLE*.

EFFICIENT AS CSS IS, THERE ARE SOME SECTIONS OF THE CITY WHERE THEIR PRESENCE DRAWS MORE *ATTENTION* THAN IS *DESIRABLE*.

BURN THEM ALL OUT, I SAY.

IT'S THE CHANCE ONE *TAKES*, HIRING THE *LOWER CLASSES*.

UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S OCCASIONALLY *NECESSARY*.

IN TIME, HARRISON. *IN TIME*.

EXCUSE ME, MISTER WOMACK.

WE'VE LOGGED AN INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC DATASPACE CONCERNING ONE OF OUR PROPRIETARY *ENCRYPTION ALGORITHMS.*

WE'VE INFORMED CSS AND REQUESTED *PRELIMINARY DEBRIEFING* OF THE PERPETRATORS.

VERY GOOD, LILI. SEE THEM IN WHEN THEY ARRIVE.

THERE JUST MIGHT BE A WAY TO *TRACE* THAT CONNECTION.

REALLY?

WE NEED TO PUT OUR CAPTIVE *DATA PIRATE* TO WORK FOR US.

FIRST WE'D NEED TO MAKE A FEW...*DESIGN MODIFICATIONS,* THEN PUT HIM --

YOU KNOW, HARRISON, I'VE BEEN *THINKING* ABOUT IT, AND I BELIEVE THAT KELLERMAN IS *RIGHT* --

-- THE *SINGAPORE FILE THEFT* AND THIS *"GHOST RIDER"* ARE SOMEHOW CONNECTED.

"-- BACK ON THE STREET..."

THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

SAY G'NIGHT, SPARKY.

POWER LEVELS: DOWN TO *FUMES*. CLOAKING FIELD: *OFF-LINE*. ESCAPE ROUTE, PICKED AT RANDOM: A *DEAD END*.

AND BLACKBOOTS ALL OVER ME LIKE A *BAD SMELL*.

KCHPTHOOM

THAP

THE SCENE WAS NOW *OFFICIALLY* UGLY.

NEWSFLASH. UP *NEXT* --

AAG SHREEE AWRK

-- MORE *BAD NEWS*.

SKAZZASHK

NNG WARRRK YOU!

ZZAK

I'D BEEN RUNNING IN *IDIOT MODE*, GETTING EVEN FOR YEARS OF BEING HASSLED BY *SECURICOPS* --

SKZZIK

SKZOOP

SKHRRRRSHKRIK

BUT THE JOLT FROM THE *RIOTWEB* WOKE ME RIGHT THE SHOCK *UP*.

UNLESS I WANTED TO LET THEM DOWNSIZE MY *FUTURE* INTO A *FOOTNOTE*, IT WAS TIME TO QUIT *SCREWING AROUND* --

-- AND GET A *PLAN*.

EAT *THIS*.

SKLANG

SHLIK

CHOOM

CHOOM

SKA-BLAM!
SKRAAAAAAAMM
ROBOT ARCHIE
SPLISH ROOSH SPLISH
DOOM
WERNER ROTH
THIRTY SECONDS.
MAYBE A MINUTE AND A HALF.
THEN I'D HAVE COMPANY.
SPLASHP
BUT I'D DITCHED LINE-OF-SIGHT --
-- AND THAT --
-- WAS ALL I NEEDED.

PICKPOCKETS IN LITTLE CALCUTTA DON'T HAVE AS MANY TRICKS AS MY HARDWARE DOES.

TWO WORDS. DUAL CONFIGURATION.

SCHIKKT

ZZUP

WRRRR

COMBAT -- AND COMPACT.

SKLIK

CHAK

VRRPT

THE SOLIDOGRAM CAMOUFLAGE SYSTEM CAN BE PROGRAMMED WITH IMAGE FILES FROM RESIDENT MEMORY.

WHICH MEANT I COULD CALL UP AN OLD FAVORITE --

-- AND MAP IT RIGHT ONTO MY SURFACE.

IN OTHER WORDS, OUT WITH THE NEW --

-- IN WITH THE OLD.

WAIT... SOMETHING...

NAH.

JUST A DOWNRAMP RAT, SLEEPING IT OFF.

KEEP SEARCHING.
BRAVO UNIT HAS HIS VEHICLE.
HE CAN'T GET FAR ON HIS OWN.
RAT PIZZA
PUSBAGS.
YOU'RE ON THE PAYBACK LIST.
IT'S GOOD TO HAVE THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO.
CYBERGOTHS
YO-YO
FIRST, THOUGH, I HAD TO ARRANGE TO FEED THE MACHINE WHILE I STILL HAD ENOUGH JUICE TO PASS FOR MEATWARE.
VWOOOMWOOOMWOOO
AW, NO.

WOOOWOOO

THOUGHT FOR A SECOND I WAS *MADE*--

-- BUT THEY DIDN'T EVEN *SEE* ME.

SOMEBODY WAS ABOUT TO HAVE A *BAD DAY.*

BUT *WHOEVER* IT WAS --

-- IT WASN'T *MY* PROBLEM.

LISTEN UP, MEN!

OPEN UP! CENTRAL SECURITY!

THIS IS A CODE 2177, WITH CORPORATE INTERROGATION PRIORITY --

-- SO NO UNNECESSARY FATALITIES.

CHUCK

DON'T SURF

THUPKLUPBUDUP

KASKRANTCH

FREEZE!

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

OH, SPEW.

THE BAR CODE.

ZEDDBOY!

WHERE YOU *BEEN*, MON?

THE WHOLE WORL', THEY THINK YOU BE *DEAD*.

REDWING?

WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE I *WASN'T*, SEEG?

ANESTHESIA AROUND?

BOSS LADY JONES, SHE IN HER OFFICE.

VBIP

SEND HIM IN, C-GRAM.

WISH SHE WOULDN'T *DO* THAT.

YOU GOT "*I WANT*" ALL OVER YOU, COCHRANE.

WHAT IS IT *THIS* TIME?

COUPLE HOURS STRAIGHT VOLTAGE, TAP-DIRECT, MAX FEED. IN *PRIVATE*.

WEIRD.

EXPENSIVE.

BUT *DO-ABLE*.

Uhm...

I'M A LITTLE *LOW* ON HARD *CURRENCY* RIGHT NOW.

THAT'S *NEWS*?

MAYBE WE CAN STILL *TALK*.

JAMMED *STRANGE* THINGS GOING ON IN THIS TOWN LATELY, EVER SINCE THE *MARTYRS* GOT *RAMBOED*.

GOT *EVERYTHING* TO DO WITH *YOU*, I THINK.

BIZ LIKE MINE, IT PAYS TO STAY *INFORMED*.

INFO-DUMP ME, AND I'LL SET YOU UP.

I'M NOT THROUGH PUTTING THE *PIECES* TOGETHER MYSELF.

NEED THAT CHARGE TO *FINISH* THE JOB.

SET ME UP *FIRST*, AND YOU'I GOT A *DEAL*.

DONE.

SPSSSHH

AND THAT WAS HOW *YESTERDAY* SHOOK DOWN.

FOR *THRILLS*, CHARGING UP *SUCKS* --

-- BUT IT'S GIVEN ME TIME TO DO SOME *DECOMPILING*.

BEEN ONE LONG *WHITE HEAT* SINCE I UPLOADED BACK TO THE WORLD.

NEED TO QUIT *MULTI-TASKING* --

-- AND SETTLE THE *MAIN BIZ*.

FIRST, GET MY *BIKE* BACK.

MANAGEMENT ONLY

I'LL BE JAMMED...

THEN --

WAREWOLF?!

ZEROMAN?!

I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!

ME?

I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD.

YOU WISH.

C'MON, MAN, LET'S GRAB A SEAT AND TRANSFER FILES!

-- AND I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING AFTER THAT.

THE WHOLE PAST WEEK IS A BAD SECTOR.

SIDE EFFECT OF THE MYCOTOXIN, PROBABLY.

I GUESS.

BUT HEY-- WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

OH, MAN, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BE-LIEVE IT.

C'MON, I GOTTA SHOW YOU SOMETHING, BUT NOT HERE...

"...OUTSIDE."

DELIVERIES ONLY

WATCH THIS.

THE THUM

PLAGUE

LORD SNOOTY

RINGO STARKINGS

!?!

HOLY GLITCH!

JAGGED --

-- OR WHAT?

I...

-NNNGH-

WARE-WOLF?

YOU OKAY?

DEC 12 LOOK OUT

WHAT?

-HAALGHK-

TRIGGER EVENT ENCOUNTERED

AAAHAUGHK

KLORTCH SKRLP

CONTINGENCY PROGRAMMING ACTIVATED

GNNNHKAHK

SKRICH SKLATCH KRAPOP

SYSTEM RECONFIGUR-ATION IN PROGRESS

GAAHK

SKNITCH PRAPT KLITITCH

TARGET DESIGNATE: "GHOST RIDER" IN RANGE

MISSION OBJECTIVE: TERMINATE.

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AUG

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BEWARE
WAREWOLF!

BUCKINGHAM '94

WAREWOLF? BEST FRIEND I EVER HAD. THE MAN WAS *SOLID STATE*. AS IN, "*THEY DON'T MAKE 'EM LIKE THAT ANYMORE.*"

HE TAUGHT ME HOW TO *HACK* THE *STREET* AFTER THE *OLD MAN* THREW ME OUT. COUNTING ON HIM TO *WATCH* MY *BACK* WAS AS EASY AS *BREATHING*.

SHOULD'VE FIGURED *THAT* WOULDN'T LAST.

NOTHING I LIKE *STAYS* THE WAY I LIKE IT.

TERMINATE TARGET: "GHOST RIDER"

SEE YOU NEXT WEDNESDAY

UNCONTROLLABLE URGE

WORDS **LEN KAMINSKI** | **PETER GROSS** BREAKDOWNS

MARK BUCKINGHAM w/**KEV SUTHERLAND** FINISHES

STARKINGS/ COMICRAFT LETTERING | **CHRISTIE SCHEELE** w/**HEROIC AGE** COLORS

EDITOR **EVAN SKOLNICK** | **BOBBIE CHASE** GROUP EDITOR | CHIEF **TOM DeFALCO**

TARGET EXTERIOR: HOLOGRAPHICALLY-CONFIGURED TACTILE FEEDBACK FIELD

SKRATCH

PURPOSE: CAMOUFLAGE

WAREWOLF?

YOU STILL *IN* THERE, MAN?

TALK TO ME!

DISREGARD VERBAL INPUT

I...

CONTENT IRRELEVANT

KRATCH

RRRGH

JAMMIT!

I DUNNO WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, OR HOW --

-- BUT ONE THING I DO KNOW --

VARR SCHKT

-- I DON'T LAY DOWN AND DIE --

TARGET STATUS CHANGE: DEPLOYING TO FULL COMBAT MODE

ZZCLAMP

CHAK

SKROK

ANALYZING TARGET...

-- FOR ANYBODY!

...HUMANIFORM ANDROID PLATFORM, HOUSING DIGITIZED MENTALITY OF --

ZERO?

CAN'T MAKE IT

COMMAND OVERRIDE

STOP

RESUME

SHRANK

JUST MY SHOCKIN' LUCK.

THERE'RE MORE *WORTHLESS PUSBAGS* IN THIS TOWN THAN I CAN *COUNT* --

L'MON, MAN!

NOW I *KNOW* YOU'RE STILL ONLINE!

-- RATBITERS I'D GREASE IN A *HOT SECOND* --

WAKE UP!

-- AND *I* GOTTA END UP RIPPIN' WITH ONE OF THE MAYBE *TWO* PEOPLE I *GIVE* A *JAM* ABOUT.

OPTION NO LONGER AVAILABLE

THRASH

NOT LIKE I'VE GOT A *CLUE* --

-- ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE *OTHER* ONE...

JEEZ, QUIT *SHOVING!* I'M *GOIN'* ALREADY!

NO TALKING.

Ah, GO *WRECK* YOURSELF.

MISTER WOMACK?

THE *PERPE-TRATORS* YOU WANTED TO SPEAK WITH, SIR.

YOU THE *BOSS?*

WHAT D'YA *WANT* WITH US?

INFORMATION.

YOU TRIED TO ACCESS A *PROPRIETARY ALGORITHM* BELONGING TO THIS COMPANY. *WHY?*

OH, *THAT.* JUST AN *ACCESS CODE MIS-READ.* TOTAL *ACCIDENT.*

WE'RE JUST A COUPLE OF *STUPID KIDS,* Y'KNOW?

OBVIOUSLY.

COOPERATION WOULD BE *MUCH* MORE INTELLIGENT.

WE FOUND *THIS DISK* ON THE SCENE, SIR.

Hm. I'LL HAVE IT LOOKED AT.

IN THE MEANTIME, TAKE *THEM* DOWN TO *NEURO-TERROGATION.*

I THINK WE'RE IN MAJOR TROUBLE, HERE.

YEAH? AND WHOSE FAULT IS *THAT,* SPUD-BOY?

I *SAID* NO *TALKING.*

WELL, WELL, WELL.

VBIP

SIR?

GOOD NEWS, HARRISON.

I THINK WE MAY HAVE HAD A *BREAKTHROUGH* REGARDING OUR RECENT PROBLEMS.

LOAD YOUR *DECRYPTION SOFTWARE*.

I'LL BE DOWN SHORTLY.

-:Mph:- SO MUCH FOR "*THE DREADED DOCTOR NEON.*"

HEY, HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW THE STUFF ON THAT DISK WAS ENCRYPTED WITH D/MONIX CYPHERWARE ?

DR. NEON

SHFF

WOMACK *WARNED* ME YOU'D BE BRINGING ME MORE WORK.

BRING THEM IN.

LEMME --

-GO!

WHUK

ZERO?

YOU CAN'T GO AND BE DEAD ON ME!

GET HER AWAY FROM THERE!

YOU SON OF A GLITCH.

YOU STILL OWE ME MONEY!

ALL RIGHT, MISSY.

'NUFF O' THAT.

SHOCK YOU, JACK!

NNUUGH

OW! SHE BIT ME!

HOLD HER STILL.

PUSBAGS!

THE MNEMO-PROMETHYLENE WILL QUIET HER DOWN.

FWT

UHUNNGK

THERE.

WE'LL START WITH HER MEMORIES OF HER *DEAD FRIEND* OVER THERE.

THERE'S STILL *QUITE* A BIT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT HIM.

MEANWHILE...

DISGRACEFUL.

PARDON ?

MMN?

Oh. JUST... *THINKING* OUT LOUD, SIR.

SOME-THING ABOUT OUR DEAD *DATA PIRATE* YOU FIND FAS-CINATING?

APPALLING IS MORE LIKE IT.

IT'S GUTTER TRASH LIKE *THIS* THAT'LL BE THE *DOWN-FALL* OF OUR SOCIETY.

Hm. YOU HAVE TO WONDER WHAT KIND OF *PARENTS* RAISE TRASH LIKE THAT.

UNLUCKY ONES.

BIP

YOU SAID SOMETHING ABOUT GOOD NEWS..?

CSS TOOK THIS OFF A *CYBERJOCK WANNABE* WHO TRIED TO ACCESS AN ALGORITHM USED TO ENCRYPT THE *STOLEN FILE* THAT'S CAUSED US SO MUCH TROUBLE.

YOU MEAN WE'VE *RECOVERED* THE SINGAPORE ARCHIVE?

HAVE YOU TOLD *KELLERMAN* YET?

NOT YET.

I'VE BEEN *THINKING*... THAT FILE IS A *SELF-DELETING ARCHIVE* WHICH ERASES ITSELF AS IT MOVES FROM SYSTEM TO SYSTEM --

-- ENSURING THAT THERE'S ONLY *ONE COPY* IN EXISTENCE AT ANY TIME.

THE SINGAPORE OFFICE DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO PREPARE AN ABSTRACT BEFORE THE EXPLOSION THAT WIPED THEM OUT --

-- SO EVEN *WE* DON'T KNOW WHAT'S IN THAT FILE, JUST THAT *THEY* THOUGHT IT WAS WORTH *MAXIMUM SECURITY MEASURES.*

THE WAY I SEE IT, WHOEVER HAS *FIRST ACCESS* TO IT WILL LIKELY HAVE SIGNIFICANT... *ADVANTAGES.*

NOW, *I'VE* GOT THE DISK, AND *YOU'VE* GOT THE RESOURCES TO DECRYPT IT QUIETLY.

YOU TELL *ME* --

YOU DISAPPOINT ME, WOMACK.

I'D THOUGHT YOUR AMBITION WAS LEASHED BY COMMON SENSE.

-- DO YOU THINK THE OLD MAN NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT IT JUST YET?

OR DO YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE YOU COULD TEACH ME TO CRUNCH NUMBERS?

INPUT FLAG

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF MODIFIED VEHICLE CONFISCATED BY CSS

PROCESSING...

MAGNIFICENT.

EASILY HALF A DOZEN UNKNOWN NEW TECHNOLOGIES.

ALL OF WHICH WILL NO DOUBT HAVE TO BE PROSCRIBED.

DISSEMINATION OF SUCH POTENTIAL MEANS OF TECHNOLOGICAL INDEPENDENCE WOULD HAVE A CATASTROPHIC EFFECT ON SOCIAL ORDER.

MEDIA FILTER ACTIVATED; KEYWORD "GHOST RIDER"

THIS IS WILLIS ADAMS REPORTING LIVE AND DIRECT FROM THE STREETS OF TRANSVERSE CITY.

A BATTLE IS RAGING TONIGHT --

-- A CLASH OF TITANS BETWEEN THE MYSTERIOUS OUTLAW KNOWN AS THE GHOST RIDER --

-- AND AN EVEN MORE TERRIFYING NEW MENACE.

CSS SPECIAL-FORCES UNITS, HAVING ALREADY ENGAGED THE GHOST RIDER IN ONE INCONCLUSIVE BATTLE EARLIER --

-- ARE REPORTEDLY EN ROUTE TO THE SCENE OF THE CARNAGE.

WHETHER THEY CAN DEALWITH THIS SITUATION, HOWEVER --

-- REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

SKRAPTCH

THRAKA

CHAM!

TARGET SUBDUED; PREDICTED MISSION COMPLETION IN 07 SECONDS...

OFFICE TO LET

JACK RUSSELL

WHRAK

YOU WISH.

L'MON, WAREWOLF!

WAKE THE SHOCK UP!

-- BEFORE I HAFTA HURT YOU!

GOT...

...NO CHOICE...

GET A GRIP --

CAN'T STOP COMMAND OVERRIDE PROGRAMMING IN MY HEAD'S GONNA MAKE ME KILL YOU IF YOU DON'T DO ME FIRST.

FIGHT IT, MAN. HANG ON. TELL ME WHAT HAP-PENED.

INFECTED ME GENOME-WIDE DNA RESEQUENCING SOME KINDA EXPERIMENTAL NANOTECH. MESSED WITH MY DEEP-STRUCTURE PROGRAMMING AND SYSTEMIC OVERRIDE TRIGGER MIND.

NOT HUMAN ANYMORE. MADE ME A ROBOT.

PLEASE.

KILL ME!

I DON'T WANNA LIVE LIKE THIS!

I... ...MAN, I CAN'T...

SHRAKAKOOM

ATAC UNIT LEADER TO CENTRAL COMMAND -- WE HAVE PERPETRATOR ACQUISITION.

MOVING TO ENGAGE.

YOU BIT-HEADS AGAIN?

CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY?!

SKAAM

PEN-ROD-POOOW

KRUK

AAUGH

SHAKRAK

THRAKAKAKAK

DIMARCO! I NEED BACK-UP!

MISSION OBJECTIVE IN JEOPARDY

REMOVING OBSTRUCTIONS

HAUGH

SKRUTCH

RODRIGUEZ -- ! HOLY GLITCH!

TAKE THEM BOTH DOWN -- FAST!

SHRAKAKAKA

CHOOM CHOOM

LEAVE HIM ALONE!

TARGET RE-ENGAGED

RESUMING PRIMARY DIRECTIVE

OH, GREAT.

>ANTIPARTICLE GENERATOR CYCLE COMPLETE

>TARGETING...

WARE-WOLF, WE GOTTA --

TOO LATE, MAN.

YOU SHOULDA LISTENED.

THAK

NEVER DID KNOW...

...WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!

ZZARRMMM

CHAKKA

NEGATIVE VISIBILITY.

HOLD YOUR POSITIONS UNTIL THE SMOKE CLEARS.

AW, NO...

DON'T...

BETTER... THIS WAY... ZEROMAN.

'LEAST I'M FREE...

...AND THE RATBITERS... LOSE.

JAMMIT, IT'S NOT FAIR!

WHO DID THIS TO YOU?

AND HAR

HARR... ISSSSS...

...ISS...

-:-

D

MONIX

WO... MACK

HARRISON !?!

KA THAK

IT NEVER ENDS!

NO MORE SCREWING AROUND.

I'M COMIN' FOR YOU, OLD MAN.

AND WHEN I FIND YOU --

DON'T EVEN TWITCH, CHROME JOB.

WE TOOK YOU DOWN ONCE ALREADY.

POET

DEMON

GAZE

EMP

WHAT, D'YOU THINK I'D FORGET?

FAT CHANCE.

THRRRMMM

OPTIC LASER SELECTED >SCAN MODE MAPPING TARGET

AIO

RECALIBRATING BEAM INTENSITY >ASSAULT MODE

ZZSHAK

SPAKASSH

PAYBACK'S BURNED INTO ROM.

SARGE!

YOU'D BETTER E-MAIL THE BODY BANKS.

SHCCT

VRRT

CHAKLAK

SHAK

KLK CHIK

TELL 'EM TO GET READY --

SCCT

KTHR
-- FOR RUSH HOUR.
NEXT: BRUTAL YOUTH!

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GHOST RIDER 2099™

YOU KILLED ME...

WHY?

BUCKINGHAM

MAINLINE NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

THE STREETS ARE RUNNING **RED** IN SECTOR SEVEN TONIGHT, AWASH IN THE **BLOOD** OF **TRANSVERSE CITY'S FINEST.**

Willis Adams
Live and Direct

MAINLINE NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

FOR NEARLY AN HOUR NOW, A BATTLE HAS RAGED HERE BETWEEN **CENTRAL SECURITY'S** ELITE **A.T.A.C.** UNIT --

Willis Adams
Live and Direct

-- AND THE OUTLAW SOME HAVE DUBBED THE "GHOST RIDER."

MAINLINE NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

THIS MYSTERIOUS FIGURE HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A **CITYWIDE DRAGNET** SINCE LATE YESTERDAY --

Willis Adams
Live and Direct

-- AFTER A **CONFRONTATION** WITH LAW-ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHICH LEFT **SEVENTEEN** HOSPITALIZED.

MAINLINE NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

THE GHOST RIDER **RESURFACED** EARLIER TODAY IN A CLASH WITH **YET ANOTHER** GROTESQUE CREATURE --

Willis Adams
Live and Direct

-- DURING WHICH HIS AS-YET-UNNAMED OPPONENT WAS REPORTEDLY **SLAIN.**

MAINLINE NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

SINCE THEN, ALL ATTEMPTS TO **SUBDUE** THIS UNEARTHLY BERSERKER HAVE MET WITH **FAILURE.**

Willis Adams
Live and Direct

AND SO, FOR **NOW** --

MAINLINE NEWS SPECIAL REPORT

-- THE **REASONS** BEHIND HIS **APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION** --

Willis Adams
Live and Direct

-- THE **SOURCE** OF HIS **INHUMAN RAGE** --

-- AND HIS **WANTON DISREGARD FOR LAW AND ORDER** --

"-- REMAIN UNKNOWN."

BAD COP.

NO DONUT.

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

LEN KAMINSKI words | MARK BUCKINGHAM breakdowns | BUCKINGHAM/SUTHERLAND finishes

STARKINGS/COMICRAFT lettering | CHRISTIE SCHEELE/HEROIC AGE colors | EVAN SKOLNICK editor | BOBBIE CHASE group editor | TOM DEFALCO chief

CODE RED! CODE RED!

OFFICER IN NEED OF --

SHRAKKRAAM

HUNT! COOPER!

FALL BACK!

NO TIME IT'S GONNA --

FIRE IN THE HOLE!

SHOOMPH

SON OF A GLITCH!

MEDIC!

WE'RE FRITOS, MAN...

REGROUP! REGROUP!

PUSBAGS--

--THIS IS FOR WAREWOLF.

KTCHRRRM!

-- REIN-FORCEMENTS NOW, DO YOU --

I'M HIT OHGAAAAWD

ON FIRE!

REGROUP, JAMMIT!

WE'RE TOAST...

RRRRSKRENCH

YOU AND THE BIZ SUITS WHO RUN THIS TOWN --

AAUGHK

-- ARE ALL GOING TO BURN!

ZZRSHAK

YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS, CHROME JOB!

YEAH?

SKLUTCH

WATCH ME.

ZZRSHAK

SKCHRM

THAT'S IT, BLACK-BOOTS.

GAME OVER!

IMPOSSIBLE AS IT MAY BE TO **BELIEVE** --

-- THIS **LONE ASSAILANT** HAS SINGLE-HANDEDLY LAID WASTE TO THE CITY'S **BEST-EQUIPPED** TEAM OF LAW-ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.

WHILE **CSS** REPORTS THAT MASSIVE **REINFORCEMENTS** ARE ALREADY EN ROUTE TO THE SCENE --

-- THE **VICTORY**, AS OF THIS MOMENT, **CLEARLY** BELONGS TO THE **GHOST RIDER.**

WRAP THAT, MURRAY. GO TO **CAMERA TWO** AND TRACK ME.

I'M GOING TO TRY AND MOVE IN **CLOSER...**

RRSKREECH!

WHAAK

THRATCH

WAIT!

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

SOME ANSWERS.

WHAT ARE YOU SO ANGRY ABOUT?

LOOK AROUND, JERKWEED.

CHECK OUT WHAT THE BIZ SUITS'VE DONE TO THIS WORLD.

TRY ASKING A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THAT.

ASK THE CORPORATIONS HOW THEY SNUFF ANYBODY WHO GETS BETWEEN THEM AND A QUICK PROFIT.

ASK THE SECURICOPS ABOUT THEIR DAILY UNDER-CLASS KILL QUOTAS.

ASK JOE AVERAGE WHY HE LET 'EM RAPE EVERYTHING DECENT A LONG TIME AGO.

AND YOU WANNA KNOW ABOUT ME --

-- ASK D/MONIX.

BIP

HOLY SHOCK!

PULL WILLIS'S FEED! NOW!

THAT WAS CLOSE.

THANK GOD FOR TIME-DELAY UPLINK.

VWOOWOOWOOWOO

NO MORE RIPPIN' WITH *SECURICOPS.*

I'M *THROUGH* SCREWING AROUND.

TIME TO DEAL OUT THE *PAYBACK* --

-- WHERE IT *COUNTS.*

The '21-'32 cancer flu epidemic. The infamous air shortages of the fifties. The nuclear strike on Bloomington in '71.

It's been a tough century for the Windy City.

Today, Neo-Chicago squats, covered in scar tissue, radioactive with attitude, just waiting --

-- for someone to pick a fight.

GOTTA FIGURE THEY CAN *TRACE* THE *CRUISER.*

DITCH IT IN TOWN. GO ON FOOT, *CLOAKED.*

FROM CHICAGO-A-GO-GO BY T.T.DALY ©2095 MAINLINE MEDIA

NAME-BRAND GUARDS.

BIO-DETECTORS AND RAZORWIRE.

D/MONIX

PROBABLY THINK THEY'RE READY FOR ANYTHING.

HEY... YOU HEAR SOME-THING?

HHKK

JUST MY BED, CALLIN' ME.

PROBABLY ARE.

ANYTHING --

-- 'CEPT ME.

SHCK

CHRRRT

CHAK

SPENT SO MUCH TIME BEING IN THEIR FACES --

-- LAST THING THEY EXPECT'LL BE STEALTH MODE.

BVRMM

SCAN MODE: MAPPING OBJECT

LOADING DATA TO IMAGING SYSTEMS

EASIEST SYSTEM HACK IN THE WORLD.

TROJAN HORSE.

WHERE'RE YOU GOING?

BACK IN A SEC.

GOTTA TAKE A LEAK.

BITHEADS.

ELEVATORS

EVENING, LAIDLAW.

EVENING... SIR.

AREN'T YOU POSTED TO GATE DUTY TONIGHT?

NOT ANYMORE.

I GOT... SPECIAL DUTY.

MEANWHILE...

"WHOEVER HAS FIRST ACCESS TO IT WILL LIKELY HAVE SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES.

"I'VE GOT THE DISK.

"YOU'VE GOT THE RESOURCES TO DECRYPT IT.

"DO YOU THINK THE OLD MAN NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT IT JUST YET?

PRESS: EXECUTE TO BEGIN DECRYPTION

"TIMES OF GREAT OPPORTUNITY.

"SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES."

EXECUTE

Hmnn.

Mmneh.

HARRISON.

MISTER WOMACK. JUST THE PERSON I WANTED TO SPEAK WITH.

ABOUT OUR... AGREEMENT, SIR... I'M NOT CERTAIN IT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA.

IF WE WERE TO... GET CAUGHT... YOU KNOW HOW MISTER KELLERMAN FEELS ABOUT...

...THE RISK...WE COULD LOSE EVERY--

HARRISON --

-- WHO FINGERED THE HOTWIRE MARTYRS?

WHY I DID, SIR, YOU KNOW THAT.

I PROVIDED YOU WITH A FULL REPORT, OUTLINING IN DETAIL --

YOU SHOCKING PUSBAG! I KNEW IT HAD TO BE YOU!

I JUST DIDN'T WANNA BELIEVE IT --

-- DIDN'T THINK EVEN YOU WERE LOW ENOUGH --

-- YOU RATBITING HYPOCRITE!

SIR, ARE YOU FEELING ILL?

THIS IS NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU...

YEAH?

FUNNY ABOUT THAT.

YOU RECOGNIZE ME NOW --

-- DAD?

KENSHIRO ?

IT CAN'T BE... YOU'RE...

...DEAD...

YEAH, THANKS TO YOU!

BUT, I SAW YOUR BODY, IT'S --

THAT WAS JUST THE MEAT THAT GREW FROM YOUR RANCID SEED.

I DON'T NEED IT ANYMORE.

THIS BODY DOESN'T HAVE THE STINK OF YOUR DNA ON IT.

WHAT... WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I WANNA KNOW HOW YOU LIVE WITH YOURSELF!

YOU WERE NOTHING BUT A COMMON GUTTER CRIMINAL.

AND IT WAS MY JOB TO GET THAT DATA BA--

YOUR JOB?!

I WAS YOUR SON!

AND YOU SOLD ME OUT!

I DID WHAT ANY LAW-ABIDING CORPORATE EMPLOYEE WOULD'VE DONE.

I HAD A DUTY TO SOCIETY.

SCREW YOUR SOCIETY!

IT'S NOTHING BUT A CON GAME --

-- RIGGED SO YOU AND THE REST OF THE SUITS --

-- CAN KEEP MAKING A PROFIT!

Oh, GOD...

THE ONLY DUTY ANYONE WITH EVEN A SHRED OF HUMANITY LEFT HAS --

-- IS TO TEAR IT

POWN!

THA KRAM

NO!
THE ARCHIVE --!
YOWCH!
SKRIP
ZZOP
WHAT ARCHIVE?
THE ARCHIVE YOU --
-- STOLE.
WHERE'D YOH GET IT?
THAT -HRRK- TRAMP GIRLFRIEND... OF YOURS.
YOH'VE GOT KYLIE?
DOWN-STAIRS... -HAKK- NEURO-INTERRO-GATION...
WHAT ABOUT MY BIKE? SECURICOPS JUST HAND THAT OVER TO YOH, TOO?
REVERSE... ENGINEERING...
WHERE?

AAHGK

ALL THIS FOR SOME STUPID BIZ FILES.

I STILL DUNNO WHAT'S IN 'EM --

-- BUT ANYTHING YOU WANT SO BAD'S GOT TO BE EVIL.

SKRANTCH

LISTEN UP, OLD MAN. I'M GONNA WRECK YOUR WORLD.

I'M GONNA TAKE ALL THE LIES YOU AND THE REST OF THE BIZ SUITS EVER CAME UP WITH, AND RAM THEM DOWN YOUR STINKING THROATS.

I'M GONNA BURN THIS TRAVESTY YOU CALL A CIVILIZATION DOWN TO THE SHOCKING BEDROCK.

AND WHEN I'M DONE --

-- I'M GOING TO COME BACK --

-AHUH HUH-

-- AND FINISH YOU.

HOW...

-AHUH HUH-

...AM I GOING TO EXPLAIN THIS?

REVERSE ENGINEERING.

SIR, I'M GETTING A VERY *STRANGE* READING ON --

ZERO

FORD

KTHRMM

LOOK OUT, IT'S --

KLINT

SKTHAAM

OH, GLITCH.

JUNK STEALTH MODE.

I WANT THEM TO *KNOW* WHAT HIT THEM.

UARNT UARNT UARNT

Oh, NOW WHAT?!

KRATHAAM

AERO

AAGHK

GET AWAY FROM HER!

KYLIE ?

SKRAPT

ZERO

HEY!

GET ME OUTTA HERE, TOO!

WHO'RE YOU?

JUST ANOTHER VICTIM OF SOCIETY, MAN.

YEAH? WHY SHOULD I?

...

OH, MAN.

OH, GOD.

IT'S...

IT'S *ME*.

THE *MEATWARE*.

I WONDER...IF I TAKE IT *WITH* ME...IF THERE'S ANY WAY I COULD...

REBOOT... MYSELF...?

NO.

THAT'S NOT ME.

THAT'S JUST A ROTTING CARCASS.

AND LIKE I SAID BEFORE --

-- I DON'T NEED IT ANYMORE.

ZRSHAK

NO GOING BACK.

SNAP KRRIKLL SPOPT

DUNNO WHAT I AM JUST YET, BUT WHATEVER IT IS --

-- THE WORLD BETTER START GETTING USED TO IT.

C'MON.

WE'RE GETTING OUTTA HERE.

ALL OF US.

WAIT --
-- SOMETHING'S --
SKOOM
THRRRRRRMMMMMMMMMM
YOW.
VIOLENCE
CYBERSPOUSE
GORE
SEX
INFECTED
Y'KNOW, THEY'RE GONNA HAVE EVERY SECURICOP IN TOWN LOOKIN' FOR --
LET 'EM LOOK.
THRRRRRMMMMMMM

THE GHOSTWORKS.

It is done.*

The datafiles which threatened to betray our existence to the humans have been destroyed.

Our sociomemetic experiment proceeds as anticipated.

* TRANSLATED FROM THE BINARY.

Although the subject remains fixated on old sub routines --

-- he has begun to comprehend the broader parameters of his mandate.

I recommend a period of observation and analysis before initiation of Stage Two.

Agreed...

NEXT NEUROPOLITIQUE

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HOST

TM

BUCKINGHAM

WELCUMTO MEDI-KWIK MAYITAKEYER ORDER?

YEAH, I NEED --

SPEAKUP, PLEASE.

BUT MMOOOMM... MY FINGERS'RE FALLING OFF!

QUIET DOWN, OR I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO CRY ABOUT!

I SAID, I NEED A JUMBO MEDICILLIN --

-- THREE ORDERS O' HAPPY MEDS --

GREAT GIBBERING ELVIS!

MMMMM

NEUROPOLITIQUE

PLEASE...

HELP HER...

ROOM

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS
KYLE HOTZ PICTURES
COMICRAFT LETTERING
CHRISTIE SCHEELE/
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I... AH... THAT IS...

YOU GOT CREDIT?

I GOT YOUR CREDIT RIGHT --

Um, LOOK...

...I REALLY THINK YOU OUGHTA DO WHAT HE SAYS.

HE'S NOT GOOD WITH CROWDS.

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

GOOD LORD.

SANDOZ, MAN -- AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! YOU GOTTA --

AND EXACTLY WHO -- OR WHAT -- ARE YOU?

I'M A...

...FRIEND OF ZERO COCHRANE.

AND SO IS SHE.

AND I'M JIMMY ALHAZARED, A.K.A. THE DREADED --

Mm.

ALL RIGHT.

BRING HER INTO THE EXAMINATION ROOM.

AND PUT THAT HEAD OUT, WILL YOU?

DEFINITELY A *DRUG REACTION.*

WHAT'S SHE ON?

NEEMO-PRO... SOMETHING. I DON'T 'MEMBER, EXACTLY.

MNEMOPRO-METHYLENE. STIMULATES THE *HIPPO-CAMPUS.*

NOT EXACTLY POPULAR AS A *RECREATIONAL.*

NO, IT WASN'T *HER,* IT WAS THE GUYS AT *D/MONIX.*

SHOT HER FULL OF IT... SHE'S BEEN LIKE THIS EVER SINCE.

LOOKS LIKE *ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK* TO ME.

HAPPENS SOMETIMES, WITH SYNTHETIC HORMONES.

I NEED TO RUN SOME TESTS, CHECK A COUPLE *DATABASES.*

ISN'T GOING TO BE *CHEAP.*

YOU TELL COCHRANE THAT THIS MAKES US *EVEN,* OKAY?

GOT IT.

IT'S *INDUCED REPETETIVE MENEMONIC SYNDROME.*

HER BRAIN CHEMISTRY'S LOCKED INTO A SORT OF *MEMORY FEEDBACK LOOP.*

GOT TO BE SOMETHING YOU CAN *DO*, RIGHT?

I DON'T KNOW. IT'S *NOT A COMMON* CONDITION.

WHAT'S *THAT* GOT TO DO WITH IT?

MEANS IT HASN'T BEEN STUDIED --

-- BECAUSE THERE'S NOT A LOT OF *PROFIT* IN DEVELOPING TREATMENTS FOR *SMALL CONSUMER BASES.*

THERE USED TO BE SOMETHING, THOUGH... A PSYCHOACTIVE CALLED *NOOTROPINE.*

TESTED BRIEFLY BACK AROUND '54 OR SO, IT HAD THE EFFECT OF RENDERING THE BRAIN *"PLASTIC,"* FREEING IT FROM *HABITUAL NEURAL RESPONSES.*

LOOKED LIKE A PROMISING TREATMENT FOR A VARIETY OF THINGS, BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT *BANNED* IT.

BUT IF IT WAS *GOOD* FOR THINGS, *CURED* PEOPLE N'STUFF, WHY'D THEY DO *THAT?*

THINK ABOUT IT.

THE LAST THING THE *POWERS THAT BE* WANT *AVAILABLE* ON THE *STREETS* IS A DRUG THAT *DESTROYS* PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONING.

CAN'T HAVE *PAVLOV'S DOGS* SLIPPING THEIR *LEASHES*, AFTER ALL.

BACK IN THE LAST CENTURY, THEY FOUGHT THE LARGEST *UNDECLARED CIVIL WAR* IN HISTORY OVER *NEURO-POLITICS.*

LYSERGIC ACID, MARIJUANA, IBOGAINE, MDMA -- THERE WAS *PLENTY* OF CLINICAL EVIDENCE FOR *THERAPEUTIC USAGE* FOR *ALL* OF THEM --

-- BUT *THAT* DIDN'T MATTER TO THE *PEOPLE IN POWER.*

I GET IT.

EUPHORICS, COCAINE-ANALOGS, SYNTHETIC ENDORPHINS -- STUFF THAT'D GET PEOPLE *HIGH* WITHOUT MAKING THEM *THINK.*

ENOUGH *HISTORY,* MAN.

HOW CAN WE SCORE SOME *NOOTROPINE?*

HARD TO *CONTROL* PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS WHEN THEY'RE BUSY HOTWIRING THEIR *OWN* PERCEPTUAL SYSTEMS.

RIGHT. SO THEY SUPPRESSED *THOSE,* AND CONCENTRATED ON *COVERTLY PROMOTING* THE TRADE IN DRUGS THAT MADE PEOPLE *HAPPIER AND STUPIDER.*

FAR AS I KNOW, YOU *CAN'T.* EVEN THE *PRECURSOR CHEMICALS* NEEDED TO MANUFACTURE IT ARE *HIGHLY CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.*

IF I CAN *GET* SOME, CAN YOU *HELP* HER?

MAYBE. BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO DO IT *FAST.*

AFTER A WHILE, HER CONDITION BECOMES *IRREVERSIBLE...*

"...SAY 48 HOURS, MAXIMUM."

KYLIE...

I DUNNO IF YOU CAN *HEAR* ME OR NOT, BUT...*HANG ON.*

I'M *NOT* GONNA SCREW THIS ONE UP.

COULDN'T SAVE *WARE-WOLF*...

...*OR* THE MARTYRS.

IT'S *MY FAULT* D/MONIX WENT AFTER YOU.

I'M *NOT* GONNA LET YOU DOWN.

NO MATTER *WHAT* IT TAKES.

I *PROMISE.*

STAY WITH HER.

I GOT *ERRANDS* TO RUN.

BUT I'LL BE *BACK.*

WHAT'S *HIS* DEAL?

WHY'D SOMEONE LIKE *HIM* LOG TIME ON *HER* ACCOUNT? IT'S NOT LIKE SHE'S ANYBODY *IMPORTANT* OR ANYTHING.

F'THAT MATTER, HE SAVED *ME* FROM D/MONIX, AND HE DOESN'T KNOW ME FROM JACK.

GOTTA BE A REASON.

SURE WISH I KNEW --

-- WHAT TO DO *NOW.*

NEVER DEALT IN CHEMICALS. NOT MY KINDA *BIZ.*

THRUMMM

POWER LEVEL 30% CAPACITY.

SHOCKIN' *TERRIFIC.*

LIKE I DIDN'T HAVE *ENOUGH* PROBLEMS *ALREADY.*

SNAK!

VAARSHK

CLOAK SUCKS TOO MUCH *JUICE.*

GOTTA GET IN THE HABIT OF GOING TO *COMPACT MODE* AND USING THE CAMOUFLAGE SYSTEM INSTEAD.

JAMMIT -- NO WAY I'M GONNA GET ANYTHING DONE WITHOUT A *RECHARGE.*

JB

STILL *OWE* ANESTHESIA FOR THE *LAST* ONE.

BET SHE'D KNOW WHO'S DEALING *PSYCHOACTIVES,* THOUGH.

MAYBE I CAN CUT A NEW DEAL.

YEAH. MIGHT TAKE SOME *FAST TALKING.* BUT --

-- I'M AFRAID TALKING FAST WON'T HELP YOU.

THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT YOU'RE A DISGRACE TO D/MONIX, JACKSON.

YOU HAD A BRIGHT FUTURE HERE, UNTIL YOUR CLUMSY ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT THE SINGAPORE ARCHIVE FOR YOUR OWN GAIN.

NOW, AS A DIRECT RESULT OF YOUR ACTIONS, THAT INFORMATION IS IRREVOCABLY LOST.

SIR, I --

SAVE YOUR PATHETIC EXCUSES!

YOUR PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN UNSATIS-FACTORY.

YOU ARE HEREBY REMOVED FROM YOUR POSITION AS HEAD OF CORPORATE SECURITY --

-- AND DEMOTED TO ONE MORE APPROPRIATE TO THE CONTRIBUTION YOU ARE ABLE TO MAKE TO THIS FIRM.

ONLY... DEMOTED?

THANK YOU, SIR.

YOU'LL BE WORKING ON ONE OF MY *PERSONAL* RESEARCH PROJECTS, DEVOTED TO DETERMINING THE *GENETIC COMPONENT* OF *DISOBEDIENCE*.

YOUR RECENT ACTIONS HAVE DEMONSTRATED YOU TO BE A *SUITABLE* CANDIDATE --

-- FOR *EXPERIMENTAL STUDY*.

AT *MINIMUM WAGE*, OF COURSE.

SEND IN *HARRISON COCHRANE*.

A... *LAB RAT* ?

Oh, GOD, NO... *PLEASE..!*

HARRISON! *DO* COME IN.

WE NEED TO *TALK*.

TALK, SIR?

YES.

ABOUT YOUR SON, *KENSHIRO*.

ABOUT THE *GHOST RIDER*.

AND ABOUT --

MAINLINE MEDIA

SPIN CONTROL !@!

WHAT THE SHOCK IS *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

IT *MEANS* THAT WE DON'T AIR ANYTHING THAT EVEN MENTIONS CORPORATE ENTITIES UNLESS WE FIRST GET *FULL APPROVAL* FROM THEIR *P.R.* LIAISONS.

AS SOON AS THAT GHOST RIDER...*THING*... OPENED HIS MOUTH AND LET *"DIMONIX"* FALL OUT, WE HAD *NO CHOICE* BUT TO PULL YOUR FEED.

YOU KNOW THE RULES AS WELL AS *I* DO.

BUT WE'RE TALKING *NEWS* HERE, MORTON --

-- SOMETHING WE SHOULD *SATELLITE GLOBALLY!*

FORGET IT.

WE HANDED OVER ALL THE *MASTER TAPES* ALREADY.

WHAT ABOUT THE *TRUTH?*

WHAT ABOUT THE PUBLIC'S *RIGHT TO KNOW?!*

OH, *COME ON*, WILLIS, DON'T GIVE ME *THAT* -- I KNOW FOR A *FACT* YOU WEREN'T *BORN YESTERDAY.*

THE PUBLIC TRADED THE *RIGHT TO KNOW* FOR THE *CHANCE TO WATCH* A LONG TIME AGO.

THE *NEWS'S* BEEN FILTERED THROUGH THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE *STATUS QUO* FOR OVER A *HUNDRED YEARS.*

AND WE WENT ALONG WITH IT BECAUSE THAT WAS IN *OUR* BEST INTEREST.

OR DO YOU *REALLY* THINK THAT IF WE FOUND OUT WATCHING VIDEO CAUSES *CANCER* --

-- THAT WE'D TELL PEOPLE ABOUT IT ON THE *SIX O'CLOCK NEWS?*

Uh, HEY. IT *DOESN'T...*

DOES IT?

Eh.

NO COMMENT.

LOOK, I *UNDERSTAND.*

YOU COULD'VE RIDDEN THIS ONE TO THE *TOP* OF THE RATINGS.

IT'S A TOUGH BREAK, BUT *GLITCH HAPPENS,* Y'KNOW?

TRY TO THINK OF IT AS THE PRICE OF *DOING BUSINESS...*

THIS IS GETTING *EXPENSIVE*, COCHRANE.

BAR CODE

MAYBE YOUR STORY AIN'T *WORTH* IT.

MAYBE YOU GOT NO STORY TO *BEGIN* WITH.

LOOK, ANESTHESIA, I *KNOW* IT'S NOT PART OF THE ORIGINAL DEAL --

-- BUT I REALLY *NEED* --

THE *ORIGINAL DEAL* WAS AGAINST MY *BETTER JUDGMENT* TO *BEGIN* WITH.

NOW YOU IN HERE, TRYING TO BUY *MORE* CREDIT WITH NOTHING BUT *VAPOR*.

YOU NEVER *WERE* ANYTHING BUT A *CHEAP HUSTLER*, COCHRANE.

GUESS THAT AIN'T *NEVER* GONNA CHANGE.

Ohhhh...

TRUST ME --

SHAK CHKT YRRRRD SCHKT

-- I'VE CHANGED.

I... STAND CORRECTED.

'CORDING TO THE *NEWS*, YOU'VE BEEN A *BUSY BOY* LATELY.

NOW, THEN. TELL ME *EVERY* LITTLE THING.

IT STARTED WHEN THE *MARTYRS* AND I SPIKED A FIBEOP TRUNKLINE --

-- BOOSTED A D/MONIX *HYPERSECURE ARCHIVE* IN TRANSIT.

D/MONIX *FINGERED* THE MARTYRS FOR THE JOB, HIRED THE *ARTIFICIAL KIDZ* TO GREASE US AND GET THE ARCHIVE BACK.

I GOT AWAY AND MANAGED TO *ENCRYPT* THE ARCHIVE INTO A PHONE CALL TO MY *GIRLFRIEND* BEFORE THE KIDZ *CAUGHT UP* WITH ME.

FIGURED THERE WAS NO WAY THEY WERE LETTING ME *LIVE*, SO I RUINED THEIR FUN BY JACKING INTO THE NET *AMPED* TO THE *MAX*, AND THEN

'SCUSE ME?

?!

SOME-THING'S *WRONG*.

SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOU'VE BEEN *TAMPERED* WITH.

WHOEVER *MADE* YOU... *WHATEVER* IT IS YOU ARE NOW, MAYBE?

!

I'LL TAKE THAT AS A *"YES."*

I 'SPECT THEY DIDN'T WANT YOU LETTING THE WORLD ONTO THEM... BUILT IN AN *INHIBITORY PROGRAM* AGAINST *TALKING* ABOUT 'EM.

SHOCKIN' PUSBAGS!

I'M GONNA --

DEAL... WITH *THAT...* LATER.

I GOT *MORE IMPORTANT* THINGS TO DO RIGHT NOW.

LOOK, 'THESIA, I GOT STUFF THAT CAN'T *WAIT*.

I NEED TO *CHARGE UP* AGAIN, AND THEN I GOTTA SCORE SOME NOOTROPINE. *FAST*.

RECHARGE IS *NO HAY PROBLEMO*.

IF THE PAST COUPLE *DAYS* ARE ANY INDICATION --

-- KEEPING YOU IN JUICE'LL BE AN *INVESTMENT* IN MAKING SURE THE SECURICOPS'RE TOO *BUSY* TO MESS *MY* BIZ.

BUT *NOOTROPINE*? THAT'S SERIOUS *BLACK PHARMACIST* MATERIAL.

THERE IS A GUY, GOES BY THE NAME *MAX SYNERGY*.

DEALS IN EXOTIC STUFF, *DESIGNER NEURO-TRANSMITTERS*, THAT KIND OF THING.

ANYBODY IN THIS TOWN CAN SET YOU UP, IT'S *HIM*.

WHERE'S HE AT?

CLUB ON *LEVEL THREE*, CALLED *SAINT VITUS'S DANCETERIA*.

FROM CONTINUOUS ENTERTAINMENT: TRANSVERSE CITY AFTER DARK ©2098 MAINLINE MEDIA

ST. VITUS'S DANCETERIA
Level Three between ramps 15 & 19 west.
No cover.

Now in its **17th** smash year!

Over 22,000 dedicated resident Ravers; beginners welcome.

Three miles of dance floor; ambient psychosonic and sublimirelinal enhanced environment.

THUMPA!

JUBADUM

But remember --

-- if you're not in the groove --

-- you may as well be invisible.

SEEMS I'M NOT THE *ONLY* ONE WORKING THE CROWD TONIGHT.

DUMPATHUM PABUMPUM

THEY LOOK LIKE *ZAIBATSU COURIERS* -- GOT SOME KINDA *BRAINSTIM* RIGS TO DAMP OUT THE *TRANCE INDUCERS.*

THUMPABUMPUMPABUMPUM

SLICK OPERATION.

THUMPABUMPUM

YOU COULD SURVEY THIS SCENE *ALL DAY* AND GET NOTHING BUT *NOISE.*

GOOD EVENING, *MISTER SYNERGY.*

QUIET ZONE.

DELIVERY HAS BEEN MADE TO JONNY QABBALAH.

VERY SLICK OPERATION.

LET'S SEE HOW THEY HANDLE *SURPRISES.*

JAGGED V.I.P. LOUNGE.

HOW DYA KEEP THE FEEBS OUT?

HOLY GLITCH!

NOW, GUNTHER, DON'T BE RUDE -- ESPECIALLY NOT TO SUCH AN... INTERESTING GUEST.

THIS AREA IS DEFINED BY SUBLIMINAL ACOUSTICS. A WALL OF SOUND, OF SORTS.

THE REVELERS ARE QUITE OBLIVIOUS TO ANYTHING WITHIN ITS PERIMETER.

REMIND ME TO BE INTERESTED SOMEDAY.

WORD IS YOU'RE THE MAN TO SEE FOR RARE CHEMICALS.

I'M LOOKING TO DO BIZ.

STANDARD BATCH LOT, OR CUSTOM?

NOOTROPINE.

NOOTROPINE... aahhhhh

THOSE WERE THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

I'D BE HAPPY TO OBLIGE YOU, IF ONLY FOR *SENTIMENTAL* REASONS -- UNFORTUNATELY, I *CANNOT*.

TO SYNTHESIZE NOOTROPINE, I'D REQUIRE A SUPPLY OF 2-4-5 *TRIOXIDICLORIZIDE*.

SO? GET SOME.

IT'S NOT QUITE THAT SIMPLE.

ONLY *ONE* COMPANY EVEN *MAKES* IT ANYMORE, AND THEN ONLY FOR THEIR OWN USE.

YEAH?

INFO-DUMP ME, AND MAYBE I CAN TEACH THEM TO *SHARE*...

RATBITERS *WOULD* HAVE TO BE OUT OF TOWN.

FIGURE *SIX HOURS* THERE, SIX *BACK.*

I CAN STILL MAKE THE *DEADLINE*, LONG AS I DON'T HAVE TO SCREW AROUND IN *BETWEEN.*

YEAH, LIKE THERE'S ANYBODY IN *NEW YORK CITY* FAST AND DENSE ENOUGH TO GIVE *ME* TROUBLE.

GET *REAL.*

WELCOME TO NEW YORK STATE A DIVISION OF ALCHEMAX

NEXT: PARADISE CITY

GUEST STARRING SPIDER-MAN 2099!

MARVEL COMICS

7 NOV

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099

VS.

SPIDER-MAN 2099

BUCKINGHAM '94

BEE-MO AUGHT STEALING

HALT!

NEW YORK REALLY SUCKS.

LEN KAMINSKI
words

KYLE HOTZ pictures

STARKINGS/COMICRAFT
lettering

HEROIC AGE/colors

EVAN SKOLNICK editor

BOBBIE CHASE group editor

TOM DeFALCO walked
right through the door

I'M IN TOWN MAYBE *TWENTY MINUTES*, AND THE NATIVES'RE *ALREADY* HASSLIN' ME.

WHAT, MAN?

OPERATING A *WHEELED VEHICLE* IS AGAINST THE LAW HERE, *SIR.*

LICENSE AND I.D. CODE. *PLEASE.*

OFFICIOUS *CREEP.* "*PLEASE*" THIS AND "*SIR*" THAT, AS IF HE'S SOME KINDA *PUBLIC SERVANT*, 'STEAD OF AN APE WITH A *PLASTIC BADGE.*

'LEAST BACK IN TRANSVERSE CITY, THE SECHRICOPS ARE *UP FRONT* ABOUT BEING FASCIST *PUSBAGS.*

Huh.

LEFT 'EM IN MY *OTHER SUIT.*

THIS IS A VERY *SERIOUS* MATTER. YOU *ARE REQUIRED BY LAW* TO --

SHOCK YOU, JACK.

FAILURE TO OBSERVE LOCAL *MAG-LEV* REGULATIONS, *RESISTING IDENTI-CHECK* BY AUTHORIZED OFFICER, AND PUBLIC USE OF *PROFANITY.*

THAT'S *IT.* YOU'RE UNDER *ARREST, PUNK.*

NAH.

I DON'T THINK SO.
SKAAW
WHOA! WHOA!
LATERAL STABILIZER'S --
SHRRRTHOOM
DID YOU SEE -
WHAT HAPP -
ACCIDENT
CALL AN AMBULANCE!
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO SCREW AROUND.
AND NEITHER DOES KYLIE.
GOT LESS THAN 36 HOURS TO GET BACK TO TRANSVERSE CITY WITH SOME 2-4-5 TRIOXIDICLORIZIDE--
-- OR SHE'S DEADWARE.
BETTER LEAVE THE BIKE WHERE IT WON'T GET ME NOTICED -- GO THE REST OF THE WAY ON FOOT.

MAN, HOW CAN ANYBODY *STAND* IT HERE?

ALL SO SHINY AND *SQUEAKY-CLEAN.*

MYLAR STREETS FULL OF *UPSCALE SUITS* AND THEIR *FAKE SMILES* BOUGHT ON *CREDIT.*

MAKES MY SKIN *CRAWL.*

THE SON OF ODIN SAVES THOSE WHO BELIEVE!

OH, YOU GOT TO BE KIDDING ME...

NOTHING TO BUY!

AS SEEN ON T.V!

EXCUSE ME, CITIZEN.

DO YOU *KNOW* WHAT CAUSES ALL THE *WARS* AND *MISERY* IN THE WORLD?

YEAH.

BITHEADS LIKE *YOU.*

THORITES.

LIN-SHOCKIN'-BELIEVABLE.

BUT...

ONE THING I CAN SAY FOR *ALCHEMAX* --

-- THEY MAKE THEMSELVES EASY TO *FIND*.

PLACE IS PROBABLY LOCKED UP TIGHTER THAN THE ONO-SENDAI *SOURCE CODE* --

-- BUT THAT MEANS *JACK* AGAINST MY *CLOAKING DEVICE*.

COMPUTER MAINTENANCE AUTHORIZED TECHNICIANS ONLY

NICE *MAINFRAME*.

BET THEY GOT SECURITY ICE A *MILE THICK* IN CYBERSPACE.

TAKE HOURS TO HACK FROM OUTSIDE.

BUT FROM IN HERE --

SNXT

CHX

-- NOT EVEN INTERESTING.

KLP

CLITCH

SHAK

GO TO SHIPPING AND RECEIVING FILES.

FIND OUT WHERE THEY KEEP THE 2-4-5 TRIOXIDI-CLORIZIDE.

YEAH, THERE IT IS.

GENETICS LAB.

STAFF PRESENTLY LOGGED IN: O'HARA, MIGUEL...

Mm?

WHO'S THERE?

WHOK

NNGHK

I'D ALMOST FEEL *BAD* CLOCKIN' HIM LIKE THAT --

-- IF HE WASN'T JUST ANOTHER BLOODSUCKING *BIZ SUIT*, HELPING A-MAX COOK UP A NEW AND IMPROVED *CANCER FLU* OR SOMETHING.

BIP

RESTRICTED ACCESS STORAGE

ENTER SECURICODE

Ahh, *BYTE* ME.

CHAK

JUJHHH

WHAT TH--?

Oh, *GREAT*. JUST WHAT I *NEED*.

THINK I'LL LET *SECURITY* HANDLE THIS...

BIP

ALCHEMAX SECURITY CONTROL...

INTRUDER ALERT -- GENETICS LAB!

MEANWHILE...

2-4-5 TRIOXIDICLORIZIDE

ACES.

NOW ALL I GOTTA DO IS GET THIS STUFF BACK TO SYNERGY, GET HIM TO COOK IT INTO NOOTROPINE, AND KYLIE'LL BE --

FREEZE!

WE'VE GOT THIS WHOLE FLOOR *SEALED OFF* -- YOU'RE NOT GOING *ANYWHERE.*

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK.

I GOT WHAT I *CAME* FOR --

-- AND I'M OUTTA HERE.

SKRAK

SKREE

PUBLIC EYE UNIT 12 RESPONDING TO ALCHEMAX SECURITY REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE -- *PERPETRATOR* IN SIGHT.

WHAT'S WITH HIS *HAND?* THAT SOME KIND OF *GRAPPLING HOOK?*

CHOOM CHOOM CHOOM CHOOM

LOOK OUT, HE'S --

MOVE OVER.

NNUG

AAGHK

HHNG

UNIT 12 IN PURSUIT OF PERPETRATOR ON STOLEN P.E. VEHICLE, MOVING TO *ENGAGE*.

PERPETRATOR HEADING *DOWNTOWN*.

SON OF A GLITCH...

DOWNTOWN'S GONNA HAVE ONE HECK OF A *MESS* TO CLEAN UP...

THAT'S NOT *OUR* PROBLEM. HOW HE GOT IN HERE *IS*.

I WANT A *FULL SWEEP* OF THE BUILDING, AND A LEVEL ONE *DIAGNOSTIC* OF SECURITY SYSTEMS.

ARE YOU *ALL RIGHT*, MISTER O'HARA?

I'LL *LIVE*.

THINK I'LL TAKE THE *REST* OF THE DAY *OFF*, THOUGH.

AND, ONE STARTLING CHANGE OF CLOTHES LATER...

FAT LOT OF HELP THE *PUBLIC EYE'S* GONNA BE IF THAT CANISTER *BROKE OPEN* DOWNTOWN.

THEY CAN'T BE BOTHERED TO PROTECT PEOPLE WITHOUT FAT *CREDIT ACCOUNTS*.

DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT TRICLORIZIDE IS *TOXIC* EVEN IN SMALL QUANTITIES.

THERE'S ENOUGH IN THAT CAN TO *TRIPLE* DOWNTOWN'S *CARCINOMA RATES*.

MAN, I'D LIKE TO GET MY CLAWS ON THE *MORON* WHO *MADE* THIS MESS.

TOO BAD HE'S BUSY WITH HIS NEW CAREER AS A *GREASE SPOT* ON THE *PAVEMENT* BY NOW.

OKAY.

PARTICULATE MATTER DETECTOR'LL BE ABLE TO SNIFF OUT TRICLORIZIDE MOLECULES DOWN TO *THREE PARTS PER MILLION*.

IF THAT CANISTER'S RUPTURED, I'LL HAVE NO TROUBLE FINDING IT.

HEY, LOOKIT WHAT I FOUND...

#.#G%AB.%

c: SYSTEM INTERRUPT...

LOADING BIOS RAM...

WOO! WHAT IS IT?

RUNNING DIAGNOSTIC...

DUNNO.

BUT IT'S GOTTA BE WORTH SOMETHIN'.

IMPACT TRAUMA TO ALL SYSTEMS; SELF-REPAIR IN PROGRESS.

RESUMING APPLICATION "ZERO COCHRANE"...

'S RIGHT.

WORTH YOUR *LIFE*, BITHEAD.

HUH? BEEN... *OFF-LINE?*

THOUGHT I HEARD...MY *OPERATING SYSTEM ITSELF..?*

YAAAHH!

WEIRD.

NOW *THIS* PART OF TOWN I CAN *DEAL* WITH.

ALMOST LIKE *HOME.*

'BOUT TIME I GOT *BACK* THERE.

LEAST NOBODY DOWN HERE IS *DUMB* ENOUGH TO *HASSLE* ME.

EXCUSE ME --

THWIPP

-- BUT I DON'T THINK THAT *BELONGS* TO YOU.

WHAT THE SHOCK IS *THAT*? SOME KINDA A-MAX *SUPER-NINJA*?

MAN, I *REALLY* HATE *NEW YORK*.

TARGET LOCK

WHOOPS.

WAITAMINUTE! THAT'S MY *MYSTERY BURGLAR*.

JAMMIT!

WHAT'S HE DOING BEING NOT *DEAD*?!

GIVE ME THAT!

WEBBING'LL KEEP IT *SEALED UP* FOR THE TIME BEING.

Mnmm. I MIGHT --

-- IF YOU ASK *NICELY* --

-- AND TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT IT FOR.

OH, *AND* EXPLAIN WHY YOU'RE *NOT* PRESENTLY DOING A *TERRIFYINGLY ACCURATE* IMPERSONATION OF A COUPLE DOZEN KILOS OF *RASPBERRY JAM.*

YOU THINK YOU'RE TOUGH ENOUGH TO *SCREW* WITH *ME* --

YOU'RE WELCOME TO *TRY* --

SCHKT

VRRT

ZZZZ-KLAK

-- BUT IT'D BE A *BIG* SHOCKIN' *MISTAKE.*

KLIX

KLIK

CHAK

Ummmm...

YOU'RE NOT FROM *AROUND* HERE...

...*ARE* YOU?

GLOWING EYES? Uh-oh...

TARGETING

SLASH

ZZZ

SEE, WHERE I COME FROM --

-- BIZ ENFORCERS GOT A REAL SHORT LIFE EXPECTANCY.

BIZ?

YOU THINK I WORK FOR ALCHEMAX !?!

Oh, MAN --

-- HAVE YOU GOT THE WRONG GUY FOR THAT.

I'M --

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE.

YOU'RE IN MY WAY!

Y'KNOW...

...I REALLY DON'T THINK I LIKE YOUR ATTITUDE.

THROK

SKRUNCH

YEAH?

GET IN LINE.

TIRAAM

TOO MANY *PIECES* TO DODGE AT ONCE --

HJNGHK

TWITCH AND YOU'RE *BACON.*

HE'S GOING FOR THE *CANISTER.* GOTTA --

OH, *SHOCK* -- *BEHIND* HIM --

"-- THE BUILDING'S COMING DOWN!"

AAAHH!

THRUMMM

SQUATTERS INSIDE...

...NOT MUCH OF A CHOICE...

C'MON!

SHRAKA

MOVE!

WHERE'S --

GONE.

GREAT. JUST GREAT.

HE JUST BETTER *MAKE SURE* HE NEVER SHOWS HIS FACE IN *THIS* TOWN AGAIN, OR I'LL --

AHH... I'VE GOT MY OWN PROBLEMS!*

*AS DETAILED MONTHLY IN SPIDEY 2099'S OWN MAG! --EVAN

TOOK MORE'N AN *HOUR* TO GET BACK TO THE *BIKE*, AND ALMOST THAT TO GET *OUTTA* THAT STINKIN' CITY.

TIME'S RUNNING OUT.

IF THAT *SPANDEX JERKWEED* MADE ME BLOW SANDOZ'S *DEADLINE*, I'M GONNA COME *BACK* HERE --

-- AND *SPLATTER* HIM ALL OVER MY *WINDSHIELD*.

ST. VITUS'S DANCETERIA.

I GOT THAT *STUFF* YOU NEEDED.

Oh, THIS *WILL* DO NICELY.

I CAN HAVE THE *NOOTROPINE* PROCESSED FOR YOU IN TWO HOURS.

WHAT'S THE *DAMAGE* ON THIS GONNA BE?

Oh, THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF 2-4-5 TRIOXIDICLORIZIDE *LEFT OVER* FROM FILLING YOUR ORDER -- *MORE* THAN ENOUGH TO COVER MY *EXPENSES.*

BEYOND *THAT,* ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU *KEEP IN MIND* --

-- YOU *OWE ME A FAVOR.*

DONE.

SHORTLY...

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN* THERE'S NO *RESPONSE* ?!

YOU *SAID* THAT --

I SAID IT *MIGHT* HELP HER, NOT THAT I WAS *SURE*.

THIS ISN'T LIKE SETTING A *BONE*, YOU KNOW. THERE'RE *EXTENUATING PSYCHOLOGICAL COFACTORS* INVOLVED.

YOU MEAN, LIKE MAYBE SHE DOESN'T *WANT* TO WAKE UP?

POSSIBLY. THERE MAY BE SOME *DEEP TRAUMA* SHE'S TRYING TO AVOID *FACING*.

THEN SOMEBODY'S GOT TO *TAP IN* AND *DRAG* HER OUT.

NOT A *CHANCE*. NEURAL INTERFACE WITH HER COULD END UP *FRYING* THE SENDER'S WETWARE.

THERE ISN'T A NEUROTECHNICIAN IN TOWN WHO'D *TOUCH* A CASE LIKE THIS.

I DON'T *HAVE* WETWARE.

SET IT UP, SANDOZ...

...I'M GOIN' *IN*.

NEXT

THE PROLOGUE

MARVEL COMICS

8 DEC

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER

Volume 2

MURDERED BY AGENTS OF THE **D/MONIX** CORPORATION, DATA PIRATE KENSHIRO "ZERO" COCHRANE'S DIGITIZED CONSCIOUSNESS WAS RECOVERED BY ARTIFICIAL ENTITIES EXISTING IN THE HIDDEN AREA OF THE WORLD'S COMPUTER NETWORK KNOWN AS THE **GHOSTWORKS.** NOW, DOWNLOADED INTO THE CARBON-STEEL BODY OF AN UNSTOPPABLE WARBOT, ZERO ONCE AGAIN RIDES THE ROUGH STREETS OF TRANSVERSE CITY – AS THE GHOSTWORKS ENTITIES' REAL-WORLD AVATAR OF JUSTICE! STAN LEE PRESENTS... **GHOST RIDER 2099!**

THE RECIDENTS OF MEMORY

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS
KYLE HOTZ PICTURES
STARKINGS/COMICRAFT LETTERING
CHRISTIE SCHEELE/HEROIC AGE COLORS
EVAN SKOLNICK EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE GROUP ED.
TOM DEFALCO CHIEF

FROM INTRODUCTORY NEURODYNAMICS BY COLIN BHAGWAT-SINGH ©2077 MAINLINE MEDIA

The virtual environments (popularly referred to as "Psychespace") created during therapeutic neural interface are primarily symbolic in nature.

Emotional states linked to recollected events are expressed as free-associated imagery which may be grotesque and disturbing.

Caution must be exercised to maintain clinical objectivity; negative reactions may result in extremely hazardous consequences.

WHAT A SHOCKIN' *MESS.*

SHOULDA *EXPECTED* THE INSIDE OF KYLIE'S HEAD'D BE TOTALLY *SHELTERED*.

ANYTHING TO MAKE IT *FUN* FOR OL' *ZERO*, RIGHT?

FINDING HER IN THIS DATA DUMP'LL BE A FIRST-CLASS *SON OF A GLITCH*.

SANDOZ SAYS SHE'S BURIED HERSELF IN *STALE CODE*. LIVING IN *RE-RUNS* OF SOME OLD *MEMORY*.

NOT TOO MUCH DIFFERENT THAN A HACKING RUN IN *C-SPACE*. NOT THE SAME *VISUAL ICONOGRAPHY*. SURE --

-- BUT STILL A CASE OF *SCROLLING UP* SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T *WANT* TO BE FOUND.

FIGURE THE DOORS REPRESENT *MEMORY STORAGE*.

JUST GOT TO FIND THE *RIGHT ONE*.

SOMETHING *HYPERSECURE* AND *READ-PROTECTED* LIKE *CRAZY*.

-- WHAT'S *INSIDE*.

MONDO BIZARRO...

LIKE *THIS* ONE.

LOOKS LIKE SHE PUT *REAL WORK* INTO PREVENTING *UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS* TO WHATEVER'S BEHIND *THERE*.

LIKE...RUNNING SOME KINDA *EMULATION PROGRAM*.

I'M...

LET'S SEE --

SKREENKCH SKRAP KRAPTI CHAK

I'M *HER*.

REALTIME: MEDI-KWIK...

I DON'T KNOW *HOW* I EVER LET MYSELF BE TALKED *INTO* THIS, JIM.*

DIRECT MIND-TO MIND *NEURAL INTERFACES* ARE NOTHING FOR AMATEURS TO FOOL WITH.

I *DUNNO*, DOCTOR SANDOZ... YOU SAID *YOURSELF* THAT IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO PULL KYLIE *OUT* OF IT --

-- AND THAT NOBODY *HUMAN'D* TAKE THE JOB.

SO, IT'S NOT LIKE THERE WAS ANY *OTHER* OPTION.

*TO FIND OUT, VID LAST ISSUE! --EVAN

ACTIVITY IN HER *HIPPOCAMPUS* JUST SHOT UP FIFTY PERCENT.

WHATEVER HE'S DOING IN THERE, IT'S HAVING *SOME* KIND OF EFFECT.

THAT GOOD OR *BAD*?

I WISH I *KNEW*...

...WHAT *THIS* IS ALL ABOUT.

I'M *SEEING* WHAT *SHE* SAW. *FEELING* WHAT SHE *FELT*.

BUT IT'S NOT MAKING A WHOLE LOT OF *SENSE*...

COMING THIS FALL FROM NETWORK 23, A BOLD NEW DIRECTION IN TELEVISION DRAMA!

SAMSA, N.Y.P.D.!

MEET DETECTIVE SERGEANT **GREG SAMSA**, ONE HONEST COP --

-- WHO FOUND HIMSELF TRANSFORMED BY FATE INTO A *GIGANTIC COCKROACH!*

WHAT TH--?!

NOW, TOGETHER WITH HIS DOUR BUT TRUSTY PARTNER, OFFICER FRANK KAFKA --

GOT PLANS FOR THE WEEKEND, FRANK?

Eh. JUST A TRIAL.

-- HE DEVOTES HIS NEWFOUND POWERS TO THE NEVER-ENDING WAR AGAINST CRIME!

BLAM BLAM BLAM

FREEZE, YOU BOZOS! POLICE OFFICER!

HALF MAN! HALF INSECT!

--ALL COP!

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

Network 23

THAT'S SAMSA, N.Y.P.D.! FRIDAY NIGHTS AT NINE, RIGHT AFTER OTHER PEOPLE'S MISERY, HERE ON NETWORK 23!

BE THERE!

Something's missing again.

DADDY? WHERE'S THE SOFA?

Things keep going away, ever since Daddy got sick and lost his job.

Faster'n faster lately, and I'm scared.

What happens when there's no more stuff to go away?

MMN.

NEED EXTRA MONEY? SURE, WE ALL DO.

AND NOW, IF YOU'RE OVER SIXTY- FIVE OR TERMINALLY ILL, YOU CAN CASH IN ON YOUR OWN MISFORTUNE!

THE PRODUCERS OF THE HOT NEW ACTION SERIES SAMSA, N.Y.P.D. ARE NOW HIRING SHORT-TERM STUNTPEOPLE!

JUST THINK -- INSTEAD OF THE LONG, MISERABLE SLIDE INTO POVERTY AND OBLIVION, YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR LOVED ONES NOT ONLY AN EXCELLENT DEATH-BENEFITS PACKAGE --

-- BUT THE PRICELESS LEGACY OF A CAREER IN SHOW BUSINESS!

CALL NOW! OPERATORS ARE STANDING BY!

MOM, WHERE'S DADDY?

Oh, no...

HOW COULD HE..?

STAY HERE, KYLIE. MOMMY HAS... AN *ERRAND* TO RUN.

...A BIZARRE INCIDENT CLAIMED THE LIVES OF TWENTY-SEVEN EARLIER TODAY DURING TAPING OF THE HOT NEW NETWORK 23 PROGRAM SAMSA, N.Y.P.D. --

-- WHEN THE WIFE OF SUICIDE STUNTMAN VIRGIL GAGARIN, INTENDING TO TALK HIM OUT OF HIS BRIEF TELEVISION CAREER, JUMPED A TECHNICIAN --

-- CAUSING EXPLOSIVES INTENDED FOR AN ENTIRELY UNRELATED SCENE TO BE DETONATED PREMATURELY.

SAMSA'S PRODUCERS ARE REPORTEDLY SO PLEASED WITH THE SPECTACULAR UNEXPECTED FOOTAGE THAT THEY PLAN TO REWRITE THE EPISODE TO INCORPORATE IT.

AS OFFICIAL COUNSEL FOR NETWORK 23, I CAN UNEQUIVOCALLY STATE THAT

DOUBLE-BONUS DEATH-BENEFITS PACKAGE

VIDEO SAMPLING ROYALTY PAYMENTS MADE QUARTERLY

PLUS OPTION FEES FOR THE RIGHTS TO ADAPT YOUR STORY FOR "TRAGEDY OF THE WEEK"

A VERY GENEROUS SETTLEMENT

SIGN HERE PLEASE

It's all crazycrazycrazycrazycrazycrazycrazy

I wanna scream but I know if I do I'll never stop.

Crazy crazy world.

Maybe me, too.

Hafta be, to not take the money.

To give a glitch about anybody.

SCRIBBSCRIP

Well, the world can go and be crazy.

I'm not.

Not anymore.

And not ever again.

EverEverEv erEverEver

RIGHT DECISION OF COURSE

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

SECRETARY WILL SEE YOU OUT

THIS ISN'T IT.

WHEREVER SHE IS, IT AIN'T HERE.

HAVE TO KEEP LOOKING...

REALTIME: D/MONIX.

WHAT A PERFECTLY MACHINED TOOL YOU ARE, HARRISON.

OUR SOCIETY CAN BE RIGHTFULLY PROUD OF THE WORKMANSHIP THAT WENT INTO MAKING YOU.

MY SON...

...HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SOURCE OF... TREMENDOUS SHAME TO ME.

RELIABILITY INDEX IN PROGRESS.

ALMOST FROM THE BEGINNING, HE WAS REBELLIOUS.

AS HE GREW OLDER, HE BECAME UNCONTROL-LABLE.

FINALLY, I DISCOVERED HE WAS INVOLVED IN DATA THEFT...

...I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO...

YOU THREW HIM OUT.

AND PROCEEDED TO ERASE ALL RECORDS THAT HE EVER EXISTED.

Y-YES.

HOW DID YOU --

COME NOW, HARRISON. *INFORMATION* IS MY *BUSINESS.*

WHEN THE SINGAPORE ARCHIVE WAS *STOLEN* IN TRANSIT, I *KNEW* WHO IT HAD TO BE.

BECAUSE THE SECURICODE USED TO PENETRATE OUR DEFENSES WAS *YOURS.*

YES.

I KNEW THERE WAS ONLY *ONE* PERSON WHO COULD HAVE *OBTAINED* IT WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE.

WHEN I LEARNED HE WAS *KILLED,* I WAS... *RELIEVED.*

EXCEPT, OF COURSE, THAT HE *ISN'T* DEAD *ANYMORE.*

SUCH A TERRIBLE *SHORTAGE* OF EQUIPMENT LIKE YOU THESE DAYS, HARRISON.

SO PRECISELY CONFORMING TO *STANDARDS.* SO *PREDICTABLE* IN *PERFORMANCE.*

HE HAS RETURNED TO *HAUNT* US IN THE FORM OF THIS *"GHOST RIDER,"* BECOMING A FAR GREATER *THREAT* IN THE PROCESS.

WHICH IS WHY I NEED *YOU.*

ME, SIR?

I'M *HAPPY* TO SERVE THIS COMPANY IN ANY WAY I *CAN,* OF COURSE, BUT I DON'T SEE --

OUR SOCIETY IS *SICK*, HARRISON.

THE *TRADITIONAL VALUES* -- *LOYALTY* TO COMPANY, *OBEDIENCE* TO AUTHORITY -- ARE *BREAKING DOWN.*

TO *RECTIFY* MATTERS, WE HAVE TO FIRST *MOTIVATE* THE POPULATION TO MAKE CERTAIN... *SACRIFICES.*

A NUMBER OF SMALL *PERSONAL LIBERTIES* -- MINOR THINGS -- BUT THINGS TO WHICH THE MASSES HAVE A *SENTIMENTAL ATTACHMENT.*

IRONICALLY, *YOUR SON* -- SUCH A CLASSIC *EXAMPLE* OF THE CORRUPTION WE'RE DISCUSSING -- HAS BECOME *EXACTLY* WHAT WE NEED TO ACHIEVE *SALVATION.*

I'M AFRAID I...DON'T *UNDER-STAND.*

A *DEMON*, HARRISON. A *PUBLIC ENEMY* SO *TERRIFYING* --

-- THAT THE POPULACE WILL RALLY TOGETHER AND *DEMAND* THE *RIGHT* TO SURRENDER THEIR PRIVLEGES AS PART OF THE *WAR EFFORT* AGAINST HIM.

AND WHEN WE HAVE THE SITUATION *IN HAND* --

-- WHEN HIS *"SERVICES"* ARE NO LONGER *REQUIRED* --

-- HE CAN BE *ERADICATED.*

FINDING THE MEANS TO DO SO WILL BE *YOUR* JOB.

I WANT YOU TO DISCOVER THE *SECRET* OF HIS *CREATION* --

-- AND THE MEANS OF HIS *DESTRUCTION.*

I *KNOW* I CAN COUNT ON YOU, HARRISON.

BECAUSE YOU ARE EVERYTHING YOUR CATASTROPHICALLY DEFECTIVE SON IS NOT.

I SEE, SIR.

I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT NOTHING WOULD PLEASE ME MORE.

A TRULY FLAWLESS INSTRUMENT.

AND SOON, I'LL HAVE ACHIEVED THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS THAT WILL ENABLE ME TO MASS-PRODUCE MANY MORE LIKE YOU.

ANAYLYSIS COMPLETE.

VERACITY PROJECTION: 98.815 PERCENT POSITIVE.

NATURALLY.

END PROGRAM.

RUN THE NEWS FOOTAGE CONFISCATED FROM *MAINLINE MEDIA*, WITH OUR *REVISED DIALOGUE*.

BIP

RUNNING MEDIA VIRUS #11437, INITIAL DISPERSAL SEGMENT.

THIS IS THE *VOICE OF REVOLUTION* SPEAKING.

THE PETTY COMPLACENCY OF TRANVERSE CITY'S *SHEEPLIKE MASSES* WILL NO LONGER BE *TOLERATED*.

THERE IS A *NEW ORDER* TO COME IN THIS CITY -- THOSE WHO DO NOT *JOIN* US WILL DIE.

WE WILL BURN THIS CITY TO *BITTER ASHES* AND *DANCE* AMONGST THE *CORPSES* OF YOUR *CHILDREN*.

SO SWEARS THE *GHOST RIDER!*

PSYCHESPACE...

A ZERO? NO WAY THAT'S COINCIDENCE.

THIS ONE'S ABOUT ME.

THIS I GOTTA SEE.

He makes a whimpery growling noise --

-- and the next thing I know, he's getting dressed.

HEY!

HUH?

WHERE'RE YOU GOING?

Gives me a look that says "Jeez, what a stupid question" all over it.

I'M DONE.

AND I GOT BIZ TO TAKE CARE OF.

He's ready to hit the door, then does a 180.

Oh, RIGHT.

Whatever he's got to say better be good.

YEAH?

ALMOST FORGOT.

CAN I BORROW FIFTY BUCKS?

UN-SHOCKIN' BELIEVABLE.

MNHEH.

hehhheh

HA HEEE

HAHA

HA HA HA HA

WELL?

YOU GOT THE CASH OR WHAT?

Oh, I like this one.

No way I'll have to worry about getting too attached --

-- he'll give me a new reason to dump him every day of the week.

HEM HAHA

MNH... MNEHEM...

AHAHAHA

HRM...

FIFTY BUCKS?

NO PROB --

NO --

NO...

NO, JAMMIT!

YOU... PUSBAG!

SHE

NEVER

LOVED

YOU!

WAS THAT REALLY HOW I LOOKED TO...

...THAT RATBITING WITCH...

...WAS JUST... SHE...

NEVER LOVED ME...

ONLY *LIKED* ME BECAUSE I WAS *DISPOSABLE*. COULD *DITCH* ME ANY TIME SHE *FELT* LIKE IT.

SHE DIDN'T FIGURE IT MIGHT *NOT* BE UP TO *HER*.

I *KNOW* WHERE SHE *IS*. NOW.

SHOULDA FIGURED THIS OUT FROM THE *START.*

ALL HER OTHER MEMORIES'RE LOCKED UP. JUST STORAGE.

THE ONE SHE'S IN --

-- IS UP AND RUNNING.

YOU SON OF A BITCH!

YOU STILL OWE ME MONEY!!

ZEKE?

RUNNING, OVER AND OVER.

YOU CAN'T GO AND BE DEAD ON ME!

YOU SON OF A GLITCH.

YOU STILL OWE ME MONEY!

DUMPING ME WOULD HAVE BEEN EASY.

ZERO?

HAVING ME -- ANYONE -- TAKEN AWAY FROM HER, SHE CAN'T DEAL.

JUST CAN'T GET PAST IT.

NOT WITHOUT HELP.

YOU CAN'T GO AND BE DEAD ON ME!

YOU SON OF A GLITCH.

ZERO?

WHAT, ALREADY?

I GOT *BIZ* TO DO HERE --

-- SO MAKE IT *QUICK*.

I *THOUGHT* YOU WERE...

WHAT I *AM* IS *BUSY*, VID?

YOU GOT SOMETHING YOU WANNA *SAY* TO ME, THEN *SAY* IT.

I *CANNOT BELIEVE* YOU.

I *THOUGHT* YOU WERE IN *TROUBLE*, AND *THIS* IS THE *THANKS* I GET?

THAT

IS

IT!

I'VE HAD *ENOUGH* OF YOUR *SCRAP!*

WE'RE *THROUGH!*

YEAH.

FIGURE WE *ARE*.

ALLLL-*RIGHT!*

uuhuumm...

YOU *DID* IT, MAN!

TOUCH ME AGAIN AND I'LL *KILL* YOU.

WHERE'S... ZERO?

DON'T *WORRY* --

-- I'LL GIVE HIM YOUR *MESSAGE*.

OH, YEAH. ONE *OTHER* THING.

YOU CAN *FORGET* ABOUT THE *FIFTY BUCKS* HE OWES YOU.

WAIT!

WHAT DOES SHE WANT NOW?

HEY.

ZERO'S... DEAD.

ISN'T HE?

WHAT IF HE IS?

YOU GONNA TELL ME YOU'D MISS HIM?

GET REAL.

HE WAS A JERKWEED LITTLE CREEP WHO NEVER THOUGHT OF ANYBODY BUT HIMSELF UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.

LET HIM ROT.

I...

LOOK. I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.

I GOT BIZ TO DO.

ZERO..?

AH, *SCREW* IT. WHY SHOULD I GIVE A *RIP*.

NOT LIKE I GOT ANY *USE* FOR ESTROGEN-FLAVORED *MEATWARE* ANYMORE.

DON'T *NEED* HER. DON'T NEED *ANYBODY*.

I GOT *BETTER* STUFF TO DO, *SERIOUS* BIZ.

ALL THAT MESSING AROUND IN HER HEAD *REMINDED* ME THAT THE GHOSTWORKS WROTE *HIDDEN CODE* INTO ME.

TIME I GOT BACK *ON-LINE* AND HAD *WORDS* WITH THEM...

NEXT--

DEMOLITION MAN

MARVEL COMICS

9
JAN

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099

MURDERED BY AGENTS OF THE **D/MONIX** CORPORATION, DATA PIRATE KENSHIRO "ZERO" COCHRANE'S DIGITIZED CONSCIOUSNESS WAS RECOVERED BY ARTIFICIAL ENTITIES EXISTING IN THE HIDDEN AREA OF THE WORLD'S COMPUTER NETWORK KNOWN AS THE **GHOSTWORKS.** NOW, DOWNLOADED INTO THE CARBON-STEEL BODY OF AN UNSTOPPABLE WARBOT, ZERO ONCE AGAIN RIDES THE ROUGH STREETS OF TRANSVERSE CITY – AS THE GHOSTWORKS ENTITIES' REAL-WORLD AVATAR OF JUSTICE! STAN LEE PRÉSENTS...

GHOST RIDER 2099!

CYBERSPACE.

I'M *RIPFLASH WHITEHEAT* WIRED TO THE *MAX.*

FAST *AND* DENSE, TAKING *MEGABYTES* OUT OF ANYTHING THAT *MOVES.*

GET IN MY *WAY.* I'LL *WRECK* YOU *UP.* CRUNCH YOUR *NUMBERS* TO BITS.

GOT THAT?

DEMOLITION MAN

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS

MARK BUCKINGHAM PENCILS KEV F. SUTHERLAND FINISHES

STARKINGS/COMICRAFT LETTERS CHRISTIE SCHEELE/HEROIC AGE COLORS

EVAN SKOLNICK EDITOR BOBBIE CHASE GROUP EDITOR TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

SO LONG AS YOU *DOWNLOAD* THE *DEAL.*

COMES TO *C-SPACE*, I BRAKE FOR *NOBODY.*

I CAN SURF DATA *ALL DAY.* CHEW *HEXADECIMALS* AND SPIT *BINARY.*

OPEN UP MY *SOURCE CODE* AND IT READS "*SUPERUSER*" ON THE FRONT END, *VIP?*

YOU GOT *THAT* STRAIGHT, MAYBE YOU CAN FIGURE WHAT IT MEANS THAT AFTER *SIX DAYS* IN *GLOBAL SEARCH MODE* --

-- I GOT ABSOLUTELY *NADA.*

GHOSTWORKS'RE SO WELL *HIDDEN* THEY MAKE HYPER-SECURE GOV MAIN-FRAMES LOOK AS EASILY ACCESSIBLE AS A *NOVORUSKYA HOOKER.*

STINKIN' *A.I.'s.*

GAVE ME ALL THAT *SCRAP* ABOUT UPLOADING ME BACK TO THE WORLD TO DO ALL KINDS OF *NOBLE STUFF.* THEN *TAMPERED* WITH MY *HEAD* --

-- *FIXED* IT SO I CAN'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THEM.

YOU CAN'T *HIDE* FOREVER, *PUSBAGS!*

I'LL *FIND* YOU!

AND WHEN I *DO* --

WHO KNOWS WHAT *ELSE* THEY DID TO ME?

THE GHOSTWORKS.

-- YOU'RE GONNA BE *SORRY* YOU SCREWED WITH *ME!*

Subject exhibits pronounced hostilty.*

Hypothesis: he has discovered one or more of our modifications to his personality code.

That is anticipated.

*TRANSLATED FROM THE BINARY.

I estimate 92.133% probability of discovery of Ghostworks-keyword inhibition of his communications skills.

I resubmit that inhibition of his matrix navigation skills also should have been performed.

Given sufficient processing time he could conceivably locate our sector.

It is irrelevant.

Projections indicate he will soon become involved in a series of conflict scenarios which will keep him too busy --

-- to be of any immediate threat to us.

THIS *SUCKS.*

BUT I'M NOT GONNA FIND THEM *THIS* WAY.

TIME TO LOGOFF AND DO SOME *DECOMPILING.*

THEY'RE OUT HERE, *SOMEWHERE.* I CAN ALMOST SMELL 'EM.

C-SPACE IS JUST TOO JAMMED *BIG* TO SEARCH SOLO.

ONLY ABOUT A GODZILLION PLACES FOR THEM TO *HIDE,* AND THAT'S WITHOUT THE *ADDRESSING TURBULENCE.*

BE BETTER OFF WRITING MYSELF A *HOUND PROGRAM* TO GO SNIFF 'EM OUT.

A.I.'S THINK THEY'RE SO *JAGGED*...LET'S SEE IF THEY CAN HIDE FROM ANOTHER STRING OF CODE.

THAT *HUNTER-KILLER* I WROTE WHEN THE MARTYRS CRACKED ZIK ZAK'D BE GOOD TO *START* WITH.

YEAH.

TIME TO STOP BY THE *CRASH-PAD* AND DIG IT UP...

FROM TRANSVERSE CITY BLUES, BY RAOUL S. DUKE, ©2097 MAINLINE MEDIA.

I tried to tell myself it was the drugs, that the bootleg growth hormones I'd been abusing were making me hallucinate more horribly than usual.

I was surrounded by a vast carnival of cultural miscegenation, a whirlwind of esthetic depravity, all of it for sale at a sinister discount.

Black market ROM chips...used myoelectric limbs made of grimy pink plastic...human organs of dubious pedigree soaking in filthy preservative fluid...barbecued iguana, sushi burritos, the dreaded curried borscht...

...carbonized sweat and monoxide competed with the laughter of the doomed for space in the air, weighting it until it felt like breathing wet concrete.

It was then I realized my prayers were all in vain, the drugs had worn off an hour ago... and **God help me,** I was in **LITTLE CALCUTTA...**

BUCKY BITS

ZEROMAN!

HOW YOU DOING?

STAYIN' IN *BIZ*, PAK.

HOW 'BOUT *YOU?* YOU STILL PUSHING THAT NASTY *BLACK CENTIPEDE* MEAT?

HARD TIMES, MY FRIEND.

SUPPLY'S TOUGH TO COME BY EVER SINCE THE SOMOANS CHASED BENWAY TO I-5.

GOT SOME NICE RECOMBINANT TOAD VENOM, THOUGH.

GIVE YOU VERY GOOD PRICE.

Nah, NOT TODAY, PAK.

GOT STUFF TO DO.

HOKAY.

DO YOURSELF A FAVOR AND STAY FROSTY.

STRANGE THINGS GOIN' ON.

LOTSA FOLKS LEAVIN' THE NEIGHBORHOOD ON THE BODY BAG SPECIAL LATELY.

JEROME X GOT SHREDDED TWO DAYS AGO -- THEY HAD TO TAKE HIM OFF THE SIDEWALK WITH A SPONGE.

NO GLITCH? JAMMIT, I LIKED HIS STUFF.

WHO WAS IT. THE ANARQUISTADORS? GLASS HAMMERS?

FRESNO BOB, HE SWEARS IT WAS SOME KINDA HORRORSHOW MONSTER WITH METAL TEETH.

HUNNH!

BOB OUGHTA LAY OFF THE SUBSTANCE D. IT'S GIVING HIM A SERIOUS I.Q SHORTAGE.

MAYBE SO, BUT HE AIN'T THE *ONLY* ONE SAYIN' STUFF LIKE THAT.

WATCH YOUR *BACK*, VID?

GOT *THAT* BURNED INTO *ROM*, 24/7.

CATCH YOU LATER...

LEAST *PAK'S* GLAD TO SEE ME.

ONLY ONE SO FAR.

KYLIE SURE AS SHOCK WOULDN'T GIVE A GLITCH...

NOT LIKE *I* CARE WHAT *SHE* THINKS... NOT AFTER SEEING THE INSIDE OF HER *HEAD*...

AHH, *SCREW* IT.

U-STOR-IT

U-STOR-IT WAREHOUSE

DREW

DOESN'T LOOK ANY DIFFERENT SINCE THE *LAST* TIME I WAS HERE...

NEVER THOUGHT I'D MISS *THIS* PLACE...

SINCE I GOT *BACK* FROM THE *DEAD*.

I KNEW YOU'D BE BACK, COCHRANE.

JUST HAD TO WAIT LONG ENOUGH.

DREW

TOLD YOU YOU WERE JAMMIN' WITH THE WRONG GUY WHEN YOU MESSED WITH ME.

NOW...

TIME TO PARTY.

SHOCKIN' TERRIFIC.

D/MONIX MUST'VE TOSSED THE PLACE AFTER THE MARTYRS GOT GREASED.

THIS WAY UP

SHOULDA FIGURED.

CARTED BACK ALL OUR DISKS LOOKING FOR THE ARCHIVE WE BOOSTED.

CHUCK
DON'T SURF
NOTHING LEFT HERE --
-- 'CEPT A BUNCH OF JUNK...
MAY AS WELL SCRAP IT, MAN.
NO WAY THAT DECK'S GONNA RUN AGAIN.
CHUCK
YOU'RE FULL OF GLITCH, PHRACK.
I CAN KEEP IT HUMMING A LONG TIME YET.
Ah, YOU'RE RIPPED, WAREWOLF.
NOTHING LASTS FOREVER.
MAYBE NOT YOU, 2600 --
-- BUT I PLAN TO.

AW, JEEZ, GUYS...

LEAVE ME ALONE... YOU'RE *DEAD* ALREADY.

IT'S NOT MY FAULT I DIDN'T GET TO *STAY* THAT WAY...

DID WHAT I COULD TO...

...TO...

THAT *YOUR* BLOOD, PHRACK? OR 2600'S?

ALREADY GOT *WAREWOLF'S* ON MY HANDS...

IT'S NOT MY FAULT!

THRAK

DETONATE

SHAKA

U-STOR-IT

WAREHOUSE

KA-BOOM

MEANWHILE...

♪ AN' NUMBER 27 SAID TO NUMBER THREE, YOU'RE THE CUTEST JAILBIRD I EVER DID SEE... ♫

SKRATCK

Mm?

SHK KLAK

HSSSSSSSS

SHIMATA...

BLAM

BLAM

GHURRR

HHUK

SKLITCH

KRUT

NGHK

SKROP

AAUUGH

SPLAT

THE CRASH-PAD...

DIDN'T THINK IT'D BE THAT *EASY.*

NOT SO TOUGH AFTER A--

KRNK

RUN

KRRMPH

SOHK TIK

ZKLAH CLITCH

KLIK

CHNK

VRRT

SOMEBODY DIES.

EM SOURCE DETECTED

PUSBAGS THAT BLEW THAT BHILDING... HIDING BACK *THERE*...

MORONS. THINK *BRICK* IS GONNA STOP --

KRANCH

THRAKOOM

THARARARMMMM

WHAT'D YOU *THINK*, THAT CUTTIN' OFF MY *BIONICS'D* DO MORE'N *SLOW* ME DOWN, COCHRANE?

WAS TIME FOR ME TO *TRADE UP*, ANYWAY.

LIKE MY *NEW* ONES?

JETER.

SHOULDA *GREASED* YOH WHEN I HAD THE *CHANCE*.*

*IN GR2099 #21

LAST ONE YOU'RE GONNA GET!

BONE MECHANIX CHARGED ME *BIG* FOR THIS CUSTOM JOB, BUT IT'LL BE WORTH IT --

-- JUST TO WATCH YOU *BURN!*

SPAWN

THOOM

AAAMMMMMM

KA THANCK!

YOU SON OF A--

WHANGK

M

I'M GONNA WRECK YOU UP, MAN.

WRECK ME?!

SKREE KAAH

Shelly

WHEN I'M DONE YOU WON'T EVEN LEAVE A *BAD SMELL* BEHIND!

WRECK YOU!

RRRMMMMNNN
SHIK
CLIK
SKREEKRAPT
SKRAM
SKASSH
SKIZZZZ
HNGHK
GNNNGH
KA KAKAKAKAKAKA KAKAKA KA KA
UURSKREE ..AWK

THIS IS IT, PUSBAG!

I'M TAKIN' YOU A.P.A.R.T!

YOH WISH.

TARGETING OPTICA LASER...

AAUUGGH!

ZZRASHP

MY EYES!

SCREENWORK

YOH MUST BE READ-ONLY.

DIDN'T LEARN JACK FROM THE FIRST TIME I TOOK YOH DOWN, DID YOH?

THRUMRUK

TOTAL SPAZ. CAN'T EVEN CONTROL HIS MACHINES NOW.

YOU RAT BITING PJS BAG SONOFA GLITCH!

KRAKHUK

I'LL GET YOU WRECK YOU

MAKE YOU SUFFER AND BEG

YEAH, RIGHT.

THRRR

LET'S SEE THE MECHANIX FIX YOU UP WITH A REPLACE-MENT--

-- FOR THIS.

LET YOU LIVE, LAST TIME.

WHAM

THIS IS THE SECOND TIME YOU'VE MADE THE MISTAKE OF TAKING ME ON.

ME --

I DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE TWICE.

SKPOPPT

FSSSSS

SKRPHT

BITHEAD.

GUESS THAT'S *IT*.

CRASH-PAD'S *GONE*.

FINAL CHHNK OF MY EX-LIFE'S *HISTORY*.

LEAST I MADE *PAYBACK* ON THE LAST *OLD DEBT*.

LATER, BACK IN LITTLE CALCUTTA...

DID YOU SEE...

HORRIBLE..!

JUST LIKE JEROME...

...GONNA BE SICK!

HEY.

WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE AB--

Oh, MAN... PAK...

GHESS I WAS WRONG.

I'M NOT THROUGH PAYING OLD DEBTS.

TXE2: CONCRETE JUNGLE

MARVEL COMICS
10 FEB
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
GHOST RIDER
2099

I UNDERSTAND THE LOCALS CALL THE NEIGHBORHOOD *NOVORUSKYA.*

I HEAR IT'S *QUITE* SCENIC.

ALL OF RUSSIA'S COLORFUL PEASANTRY *WITH-OUT* THE DREARY *NEO-SOVIET ARCHITECTURE.*

MY *COMPLIMENTS* ON YOUR CHOICE OF *TARGETS,* MY DEAR.

A VERIFIED *PHYSICAL PRECOGNATE* WITH SEVENTEEN YEARS SERVICE IN THE TERMINATIONS DEPARTMENT OF *N.K.V.D. INC.*

A NATURAL BORN KILLER. *SPLENDID.*

HOHKS63

ONE SHOULD *ALWAYS* ENDEAVOR TO MAINTAIN AT LEAST THE *ILLUSION* --

-- OF A *SPORTING CHANCE.*

BOZHEMOI...

IT CANNOT *BE...*

NYET!

CONCRETE JUNGLE
HHRRRRRAARGH
HHNGHK
SKLITCH
WORDS: LEN KAMINSKI
PICTURES: KYLE HOTZ
LETTERING: STARKINGS/COMICRAFT
COLORS: CHRISTIE SCHEELE/HEROIC AGE
EDITOR: EVAN SKOLNICK
EDITOR IN CHIEF: BOBBIE CHASE
AAUUUGGH
RAPPTCHH
GNNG
SKRUUPT
AAAHAGGK
-:HHHHFF:-
-:HHH-:HFF:-
-:H-HLK-HHLKK:-
OUT-STANDING, MY DEAR.

A MOST *IMPRESSIVE* ADDITION TO YOUR *TROPHY* WALL.

I DARESAY YOU RANK AS ONE OF OUR *TOP THREE* PLAYERS AT THIS POINT, *MS. MATLIN.*

YOU *FLATTER* ME *NEEDLESSLY*, MISTER HELMS.

I'M HONORED MERELY BY BEING *ALLOWED* TO *PARTICIPATE.*

THAT PRIVILEGE IS YOURS *BY RIGHT*, OF COURSE.

YOUR *POSITION* AND *PEDIGREE* ASSURE YOU A PLACE AT THE TABLE.

BOTH PLAYERS AND PREY ARE SELECTED BY THE *INVISIBLE HAND* OF *ECONOMICS*, EACH FULFILLING THE ROLE *ASSIGNED* BY *BIRTH* AND *STATUS.*

OUR GAME IS BUT AN EXTENSION OF THE *NATURAL ORDER* OF THINGS.

A TOAST, THEN, TO *MOTHER NATURE.*

RED OF FANG AND CLAW.

SALUT!

CHNGK

SQUEENK

I'M TELLIN' YA, ZERO -- 'S THE STRAIGHT DOPE.

GOT IT HOT OFF THE UNDER-NET.

UNDERNET, RIGHT. BUNCH OF OTAKU NEWSFREAKS BOUNCING RUMORS AND JUNK DATA OFF SATELLITES BY PIRATE UPLINK.

YOU COULD GO OVER EVERY BIT WITH AN ELECTRON MICROSCOPE FOR A MILLION YEARS AND NOT FIND ANYTHING USEFUL.

ONCE IN A WHILE, THOUGH, LOX ACCIDENTALLY LATCHES ONTO SOMETHING WORTHWHILE, SO...

YEAH, SURE, LOX.

I'M LISTENING, ALREADY.

GETCHA A DRINK?

DO I LOOK SUICIDAL?

I'M HERE FOR INFO, LOX, NOT A REASON TO NEED MY STOMACH RE-LINED.

WE'RE TALKING MILITARY PROJ GONE BAD.

Y'KNOW, ONE O'THEM SUPER SOLDIER THINGS TH' GOV NEVER SEEMS TO GIVE UP ON.

WAY I HEARD, TH' RAMBOT CUT ITSELF LOOSE, NOW IT'S LOOKING TO DO THE BONE DANCE ALL OVER ITS OLD UNIT.

Ah, THAT'S BITTEN.

PAK WASN'T GOV, HE WAS EX-YAKUZA.

FRESNO BOB, YEAH, HIM I CAN SEE, BUT JEROME X? NO WAY. THAT PROGRAM DOESN'T RUN AT ALL.

I'M TELLIN' YA IT'S THE --

--ABSOLUTE TRUTH. ON MY POOR VLADIMIR'S GRAVE --

-- GOD MAY HE REST AND NOT COME BACK TO BE HAUNTING ME WITH HIS BAD BREATH AND TRENCH-FOOT --

-- I SWEAR IT.

UH-HUH, RIGHT.

HE COMES BACK, I'LL GREASE HIM AGAIN FOR YOU, OKAY?

GOT NICE ALGERIAN ROM CHIPS HERE, DECRYPTED SERIAL NUMBERS, UN-TRACEABLE.

FOR YOU, I GIVE GOOD PRICE...

SAVE IT FOR SOMEONE WHO GIVES A RIP, 'SELKA.

NOW, GIVE.

BUZO

LIPEDES

CENTIPEDES

BEATLES

IT'S MUTROIDS, I TELL YOU!

BIZ, THEY DUMP RADIOACTIVES IN SEWERS --

TURN DOWNRAMPERS INTO MONSTERS.

UH-HUH.

AND THEY GOTTA EAT HUMAN FLESH, CUZ IT'S THE ONLY THING KEEPS THEIR LONG-CHAIN PROTEINS FROM DECAYING, RIGHT?

SAW IT ON THE ATROCITY CHANNEL LAST WEEK -- OLD SCI-FI VIDDER. DIDN'T BUY IT THEN, EITHER.

Ah, BYTE ME, Y'OLD BAG.

YOU'RE WASTING MY SHOCKIN' --

Eh?! WHO TOLD YOU?

-- TIME. A LONG, LONG TIME.

BEEN GOIN' ON SINCE THE TWENCEN -- EVERYBODY KNOWS IT.

KNOWS WHAT, CASH?

E.T.'S, NATCH.

GOV AND BIZ, THEY GOT A SECRET DEAL TO LET 'EM GO AROUND KILLIN' FOLKS LONG AS THEY GIVE 'EM NEW TECH.

Oh, PUH-LEEZE... GET REAL.

WHAT, YOU DON'T THINK THERE'S INTELLIGENT LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS?

YOU KIDDING? I HAVEN'T EVEN SEEN ANY HERE SO FAR.

NOT CASH'S GENDER, THAT'S FOR SURE.

HIR REGULAR TRICKS DON'T EVEN KNOW THAT.

-:Heeheehee:- YOU'RE KINDA CUTE, Y'KNOW. SURE YOU DON'T WANT A QUICKIE?

SWEETHEART...

...I'D RATHER BE EATEN BY RATS.

SPEAKING OF WHICH...

YO, WEEZ.

WHAT'S NEW AND IMPROVED?

JUST GOT A KILO OF SOMETHING JAGGED. WANT A TASTE?

NOT TODAY, MAN. GOT BIZ TO DO.

YOU HEAR ANY *BUZZ* ABOUT WHO GREASED *PAK* AND *FRESNO BOB*?

Eh, I GOT *BETTER* THINGS TO DO WITH MY *RAM*.

FIGURE THEY WERE ALL BIG-TIME *HARDCASES*... THEY JAMMED WITH THE *WRONG CROWD*, IS ALL.

Hmn. *YEAH*...

HADN'T *CRUNCHED* THOSE NUMBERS.

ALL THE TARGETS *WERE* HARDCASES. SO IF I CAN'T FIND A WAY TO *TRACK DOWN* WHOEVER DID THE HITS --

-- MAYBE THERE'S A WAY TO GET *THEM* TO COME TO *ME*...

THANKS, WEEZ.

NO CHARGE, Z-MAN.

WATCHOO GOT *T'DAY*, WEEZ?

BRAND-NEW *SYNTHETIC NEURO-TRANSMITTER*, HOT OUTTA THE VAT.

THEY CALL IT *"WHITE HEAT"*...

ONE SALE, THREE HOURS, AND TWENTY BLOCKS LATER...

WHAT IS IT WITH YOU?!

OUR BIZ IS DONE, VID?

SO LEAMME ALONE ALREADY!

BUT... I WAS KINDA THINKING, WE COULD BE, Y'KNOW, FRIENDS.

OR SOMETHING.

THAT LITTLE CREEP BOTHERIN' YOU, BABE?

WE DON'T LIKE BYTE-SIZE RUNTS HASSLIN' OUR WOMEN...

...MAYBE WE OUGHTA TEACH 'IM A LESSON...

YOUR WOMEN !?!

JACK OUT, BITHEAD!

WHAT'RE YOU, SOME KINDA TWISTO DWARF-GROUPIE?

MAYBE IT'S TIME SOMEONE UPLOADED YOU A NICE. BIG --

ALL RIGHT--

-- BREAK IT UP!

YOU GONNA MAKE US, MOJO?

TOXIC ZOMBIES AIN'T AFRAID O'NO STINKING BLACK-BOOTS!

YEAH!

WE DON'T GOTTA TAKE GLITCH FROM THEIR KIND!

RATBITING SECURICOP SCUM LIKE YOU'RE WHAT'S WRECKIN' PROPERTY VALUES 'ROUND HERE.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT.

AGGRAVATED VERBAL HARASSMENT OF A PEACE OFFICER.

WE AUTHORIZED FOR LETHAL FORCE IN THIS 'HOOD?

YUP.

I LOVE THIS JOB.

GREASE 'EM!

JESUS H. SHOCK!

UHUK

GHNRGK

SK

4K

NGKBH

THRAWCH

NNG

SON OF A GLITCH!

HEARD ABOUT HIM, BUT --

HEY!

DUNNO WHO YOU ARE, MAN --

-- BUT YOU'RE HISTORY!

BELIEVE IT, RATBITE.

FUNNY THING ABOUT HISTORY.

FWASHUP

ALWAYS GETS WRITTEN--

SHIK CHAK

-- BY THE WINNERS.

THE DOOM

FWASHUP

FADE. NOW.

NEXT.

MUST BE *AUGMENTED* OUT THE *WAZOO.*

LAST OF THE LIMBRA NINE *BLACK OPS* THE GOV USED IN *BOLIVIA.* *SUITBOYS* JUST SIGNED HIM TO AN *EXCLUSIVE CONTRACT.*

PROMO'S GOT A WHOLE NEW *AD CAMPAIGN* BUILT AROUND THE DEAL.

THEY CALL HIM CODA --

-- THE *LAST WORD* IN *LAW* ENFORCE-MENT.

CHAM CHAM CHAM

Uh...HEY. THANKS FOR THE... *ASSIST.*

Uhhh... *YEAH.*

TO *uhhhh...*WHAT DO WE OWE, Y'KNOW, THE *FAVOR?*

THUK

FWASHUP

PRACTICE.

TELEPRESENCE SYSTEM ACTIVATED. STATE NAME AND UNIT NUMBER FOR VOICEPRINT VERIFICATION

MATLIN, DIANA J. PILOTING PREDATOR THIRTY-SEVEN.

VERIFICATION COMPLETE.

TAKE PREDATOR THIRTY-SEVEN OFF STANDBY MODE.

ENGAGE INTERFACE.

Ohhhh...

YESSSS...

INTERFACE COMPLETE. ENTERING STALK MODE.

SELECT TARGET(S)?

Hmmm... HOW ABOUT THAT ONE?

CAPTURING VISUAL TO IDENTISCAN. ACCESSING CSS DATABASE...

IDENTIFILE MATCH SUCCESSFUL. SUBJECT: JETER, C. NMI.

OFFENSES ON RECORD: 47
VOIGHT-COMP TEST RESULTS:
TERTIARY SOCIOPATHY
THREAT INDEX: *7.51*

HE'LL DO.

UNGHK

HCSSSSS

SKRICHANGK

FOR A WARM-UP EXERCISE, ANYWAY.

WAIT....

...SOME-THING STRANGE HERE...

...SOME KIND OF --

-- DESIGNER BIOFORM.

PUTTING OUT *ELF NOISE* WHOLESALE. MUST BE WIRED FOR *TELE-OPERATION.*

HSSSS

MAY AS WELL DITCH THE *HOLOFLAGE.*

CLIT CHAK

PYOWG

YOU DON'T *LOOK* LIKE GOV OR BIZ.

MUST BE A *CUSTOM-TAILORED* JOB.

NOT CHEAP.

TOO BAD.

YOU PICKED THE WRONG TARGET *TONIGHT,* PUSBAG.

NOT SERIOUS, JUST ENOUGH TO *RUIN* MY *PERFECT RECORD.*

JAMMIT.

THIS IS *NO* ORDINARY TARGET -- I NEED A *RULING.*

Mmn... *REMARK-ABLE.*

I DO BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE A RARE *OPPORTUNITY* HERE --

HGSH

SKREE-CHUNK

HRRGH

SHK

NNNK

I'M NOT BUYING IT!

AH, BAG THE HORROR-SHOW NOISE.

KTHWRRR

I'VE GOT A DAMAGE ALERT.

-- FOR A MULTI-PLAYER GAME.

THRRRR

LISTEN UP, PUSBAG!

YOU GREASED A *FRIEND* OF MINE!

AND WHEN I'M DONE *WRECKING UP* THIS EXPENSIVE *TOY* OF YOURS --

-- I'M COMIN' FOR *YOU!*

SNARRGGH

Oh, SUCH *SPIRIT.*

KEEP HIM *OCCUPIED,* DIANA.

WE'LL BE *JOINING* YOU SHORTLY.

HISS

UNGHH

THING'S BUILT FOR *SPEED.*

NOT A PROBLEM.

NOT SINCE I READ THE BIKE'S *AUTO-CONTROL* USER HELP FILES.

FANGFACE WANTS A *CHASE SCENE* --

-- IT'S GOT ONE.

THRUUUMM

HE'S GOT SOME KIND OF *VEHICLE.*

THIS'LL BE A *SHORTER* CHASE THAN I HAD IN *MIND.*

I'LL HAVE *ETA* AND *RENDEZVOUS COORDINATES* IN A MINUTE.

ALMOST TOO EASY.

THRUUUMMM

INFRA-RED IMAGING

THAT THING'S LEAKING *THERMALS* LIKE A *BAD SMELL.*

HGGSSS

NEWS-FLASH, BITHEAD!

RRRLITCH

YOU'RE NAILED!

RRRUUUMM

SKRANGK
NOW WHAT?
HCSSSS
KLANGKT
GHURRR
RONRG
SQUISH
SHURURR
WRTK
WNKK
WHAT'S OUR SCENARIO?
PURELY IMPROVISATIONAL, MY DEAR.
STANDARD RULES ARE SUSPENDED FOR THE DURATION OF THIS PARTICULAR GAME.
TACTICAL FREESTYLE, UNLIMITED GAMETIME, NO POINT MAXIMUM.
BUT PLEASE --

"-- NO WAGERING."

SHOCKIN' TERRIFIC...

NEXT... WILD IN THE STREETS

MARVEL COMICS

11
MAR

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099

VIRTUAL MURDER!

MURDERED BY AGENTS OF THE **D/MONIX** CORPORATION, DATA PIRATE KENSHIRO "ZERO" COCHRANE'S DIGITIZED CONSCIOUSNESS WAS RECOVERED BY ARTIFICIAL ENTITIES EXISTING IN THE HIDDEN AREA OF THE WORLD'S COMPUTER NETWORK KNOWN AS THE **GHOSTWORKS.** NOW, DOWNLOADED INTO THE CARBON-STEEL BODY OF AN UNSTOPPABLE WARBOT, ZERO ONCE AGAIN RIDES THE ROUGH STREETS OF TRANSVERSE CITY – AS THE GHOSTWORKS ENTITIES' REAL-WORLD AVATAR OF JUSTICE! STAN LEE PRESENTS...

GHOST RIDER 2099

WILD IN THE STREETS

I WANT HIS *HEAD* FOR MY *ART* COLLECTION.

DON'T BE *GAUCHE*, SCALLA.

LEN KAMINSKI words ✧ **KYLE HOTZ** pictures

STARKINGS/ COMICRAFT lettering ✧ **CHRISTIE SCHEELE & HEROIC AGE** colors ✧ **EVAN SKOLNICK** editor ✧ **BOBBIE CHASE** editor in chief

SO, YOU HORRORSHOWS *CAN* TALK.

IN *THAT* CASE --

HUKK

HRRGH

-- YOU GOT ANY *LAST WORDS?*

ZSHRAK

OUTSTANDING!

SON OF A GLITCH. TOUGH AND FAST.

HE MAY ACTUALLY LAST LONG ENOUGH TO AMUSE ALL OF US.

BET ON IT, JACK --

WAGERING, I'M AFRAID --

-- IS PROHIBITED.

HGNK

WE MUST SEE TO IT YOU'RE AWARDED BONUS POINTS FOR FINDING THIS ONE, MS. MATLIN.

MY PLEASURE, MISTER GINGRICH, I --

-- uh...

-HKUDGHPH-

-HUK-

KRRRAK!

THE FREEHK

PUSBAGS!

YOU THINK 'CAUSE YOU'RE *RICH* ENOUGH TO AFFORD THIS *REMOTE-CONTROL HARDWARE*...

...IT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO *SLAUGHTER* PEOPLE FOR *FUN*?

FOR "*BONUS POINTS*" ?!

-URHK-

MY WORD, A CASUALTY!

UNPRECEDENTED!

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT SCREWING WITH *DOWNRAMP STREET RATS* ANYMORE, JACK. *DESIGNER PREDATORS* MAY BE GOOD FOR HUNTING THE *NORMALS* --

-- BUT YOU WRECKED UP *BIG-TIME* DOING IT ON *MY* TURF -- AND KILLING *MY FRIEND!*

'N GR2099 #s 9 & 10! -- EVAN

uUurRHh HUK

SOMETHING WRONG

-gblhhrrk-

HURTS

HURTS HURTS HURRRRR

GRRR HURRGH

PREDATOR #36 SYSTEM FAILURE.

TELEPRESENCE LINK EMERGENCY ABORT.

WARNING: OPERATOR SHOULD SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.

HRRR?

SPLENDID TACTIC, THURMOND.

I HAVE HIM ..

BLAST!

UNTREATED NEURAL TRAUMA MAY RESULT IN SPEECH APHASIA...

GHURR

...MEMORY LOSS...

PLEASE, MY DEAR, I *UNDERSTAND* YOUR *DISAPPOINTMENT* AT BEING CUT OUT OF THE GAME --

-- BUT WE'RE *QUITE* BUSY AT THE MOMENT...

...AND PSYCHOSIS.

HCSS!

ANIMALS.

I REMEMBER WHEN THIS SECTION OF COMPANY HOUSING WAS RESERVED FOR MANAGEMENT.

NOW THEY'RE EVEN LETTING MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL IN.

INSUFFERABLE.

LIKE SO MANY THINGS THESE DAYS.

SHINOBU?

HONEY, I M HOME...

MMNH.

ZZZZ

BUT WHAT OF ME, ANTOINE? NEITHER DEAD NOR ALIVE, CAN I EVER TRULY LOVE AGAIN?

ne DUKES of BIOHAZARD

Oh, SYLVIA, IF ONLY WE HAD NEVER COME TO SRI LANKA...

Oh, I'M FINE. HOW WAS YOUR DAY, DEAR?

IT'S NO USE, ANTOINE.

WE BOTH KNOW IT'S BEEN OVER BETWEEN US FOR YEARS NOW.

BEEN OVER BETWEEN US FOR YEARS NOW.

I'VE A NEW PROJECT AT WORK.

IT'S TIME TO END THIS CHARADE.

ONCE IT'S DONE, I THINK I'LL FINALLY BE VESTED.

WE CAN UPGRADE OUR HOUSING STATUS.

I CAN'T, I WON'T LISTEN, SYLVIA!

WON'T THAT BE NICE?

→FSHHIP←

HHHGGKKP

WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM TO BRING YOU THE FOLLOWING MAINLINE MEDIA EXCLUSIVE NEWSFLASH!

HAGGHH HGLBHK

Oh, DEAR. NOT AGAIN...

NEWSFLASH

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, MANY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RAISED ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS FIGURE KNOWN AS THE "GHOST RIDER"...

IT'S ALL RIGHT, DEAR... JUST A BROADCAST INTERRUPTION.

NOW, HERE IN HIS OWN WORDS, ARE THE SHOCKING ANSWERS...

THIS IS THE VOICE --

-- OF REVOLUTION SPEAKING.

THE PETTY COMPLACENCY OF TRANSVERSE CITY'S *SHEEPLIKE MASSES* WILL NO LONGER BE *TOLERATED*.

SAY *WHAT?!*

NO *SHOCKIN'* WAY!

YEAH... AFTER ALL THE *SCRAP* HE WENT THROUGH HELPING *US* OUT* --

-- IT SORTA DOESN'T *SCAN*...

WE WILL BURN THIS CITY TO *BITTER ASHES* --

*GR2099 #'S 5-8! EVAN.

-- AND DANCE AMONG THE CORPSES OF YOUR CHILDREN.

ALWAYS DID HAVE A NASTY MOUTH ON YOU, COCHRANE --

-- BUT DIALOG LIKE THIS? NOT HARDLY.

THIS'S GOT "MEDIA VIRUS" STAMPED ALL OVER IT.

BIZ SUITS'LL USE IT TO DECLARE WAR ON ANYTHING THEY DON'T ALREADY OWN.

BIP

SIRUS.

JONES HERE.

PUT OUT THE WORD. I'M CALLIN' A MEET OF THE UNDERNET.

THERE IS A NEW ORDER TO COME IN THIS CITY --

THOSE WHO DO NOT JOIN US WILL DIE.

GREAT SHRIEKING ELVIS IN GEO-SYNCHRONOUS ORBIT, MORTY --

HAVE YOU ALL LOST YOUR MINDS?!

I SHOT THAT FOOTAGE, AND NONE OF THAT IS ON THE ORIGINAL TAPE! THIS IS BEYOND SPIN CONTROL, THIS IS OUTRIGHT--

-:SIGH:-

CORPORATE PREROGATIVE, WILLIS.

YOUR CONTRACT EXPRESSLY STATES THAT --

HANG ON.

ALL RIGHT, WILL. YOU WANTED TO RIDE THIS STORY, YOU GOT IT.

WORD IS, THAT GHOST RIDER OF YOURS AND SIX OTHER UGLIES ARE TEARING UP SECTOR 13 RIGHT NOW...

I'M ON IT.

BUT THIS TIME, I DO MY OWN EDITING!

SO SWEARS --

-- THE GHOST RIDER!

NICE SPEECH.

-PFAUGHH-

BE SERIOUS, CODA. IT'S JUST THE USUAL RADICAL UNDERGROUND GARBAGE.

BUT I DON'T LIKE THE IMPLICATION THAT...*THING* IS WORKING FOR *THEM* NOW.

BAD *ENOUGH* HE'S BEEN MAKING A MOCKERY OF *LAW AND ORDER* IN THIS CITY, BUT IF HE'S GONE *POLITICAL* ON US, IT'LL BE *PAYDAY* FOR THE *DEVIL*.

MEANWHILE, THE *CORPORATES*'RE ON MY CASE TO BRING HIM IN *INTACT* AND *REVERSE-ENGINEER* HIM.

TOO BAD FOR THEM. *I'M* STILL DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL SECURITY, AND *I* CALL THE SHOTS.

OFFICIALLY, WE'RE DOING EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO *ACCOMMODATE* THEIR DESIRES, OF COURSE.

UNOFFICIALLY, I DON'T WANT ENOUGH OF THAT PERP LEFT IN *ONE PLACE* TO BE WORTH *RECYCLING*.

CLEAR?

ONLY ONE THING I NEED TO KNOW...

"...WHERE'S HE AT?"

THRRR

RRRRH

HOW'S IT *FEEL*, BITHEADS?

KTHRVRSKREEEE

YOU *LIKE* JAMMIN' WITH SOMEBODY WHO CAN *FIGHT BACK*?

OR AM I *SPOILIN'* ALL YOUR *FUN*?

WHONGK

Oh, NOT *AT ALL*.

KRAKAN

METRO

PRAY CONTINUE.

QUICK! BEFORE WE *MISS* SOME-THING!

ALL RIGHT.

THRAKAAM

YOUR TURN, FAT BOY!

VRSKRUPT

WHAT THE SHOCK!

I HADN'T THOUGHT ANYONE COULD TAKE THURMOND IN SINGLE COMBAT.

HEY, DON'T LOOK AT ME...

I...

HUNNGHLK

HAAUGHHK

HAAKGHK

GKK

"...I BARELY TOUCHED HIM."

SLURPSHP LEPHRR

RRRROWGH HRRG HRRG

RRRR

SKLITCH

-JILGRHK-

-AAUUGHLK-

-HAAGHK-

ATWATER'S GOING TO BE *FURIOUS*. HE LOVED THAT SYSTEM BETTER THAN HIS *CHILDREN*.

WE *MUST* REMEMBER TO BRING HIM A NICE *SOUVENIR*.

YEAH, RIGHT.

WAIT --

-- SOMETHING IS WRONG --

SOUVENIR, HUH?

VID IT, JERKWEED --

AHAGK

ONLY THING YOU'RE GETTING AROUND HERE --

--IS EXTINCT!

ULGHK

DEFINITELY SOMETHING NOT --

HUURRR

MNH?

WHAT?

HHROWNGHK

HUUGHK

NO..!

GET... OFF!

HEY, PUSBAG.

HCSSSSS

AAUUGGH

I GOT TWO WORDS FOR YOU.

RRRG

RRURGH

SKLITCH

RPRHPT

KRHLCH

HGRGRAAGH

NNNUUHH

GAME... OVER.

YOU... HHHG.. MUST... LISTEN...

KHAAK

KHAAAK

SHE'S... HAAG... INSANE...

...K-KILLING ME...

LIKE I SHOULD CARE?

JUST SAVING ME THE TROUBLE.

THIS AREA... AAUGHK

HER TERR... IT... TORY... SHE KILLED... OTHERS... YOUR FRIEND...

COME... CITI... PLEX... DELTA... HUUK FOR YOUR... REVENGE...

...AND MINE...

HAAR RGH

HHGGHK

FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, YOU CAN ROT, MAN --

-- BUT YOU GOT A DEAL.

RECORDING

OH, NO YOU DON'T...

YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY FROM ME THIS TIME...

TRACKING...

VEHICLE: MAINLINE MEDIA REGISTRATION No.172355/DLX

ACKNOWLEDGED. ENGAGE WHEN READY.

PURSUIT MODE.

DO IT.

TIRUUUMM

NEXT: CODA

MARVEL COMICS

12 APR

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099™

MEYLON/MESNARD/HECTOR

HEROIC AGE

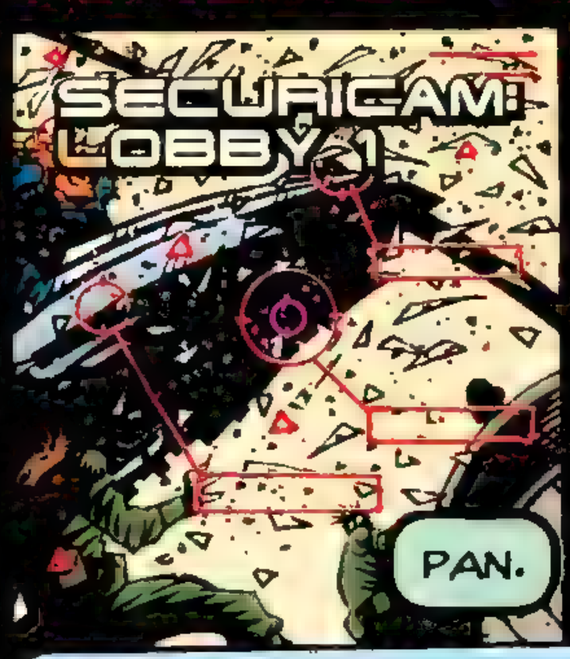
CITIPLEX DELTA, IN THE HEART OF NEO-CHICAGO...

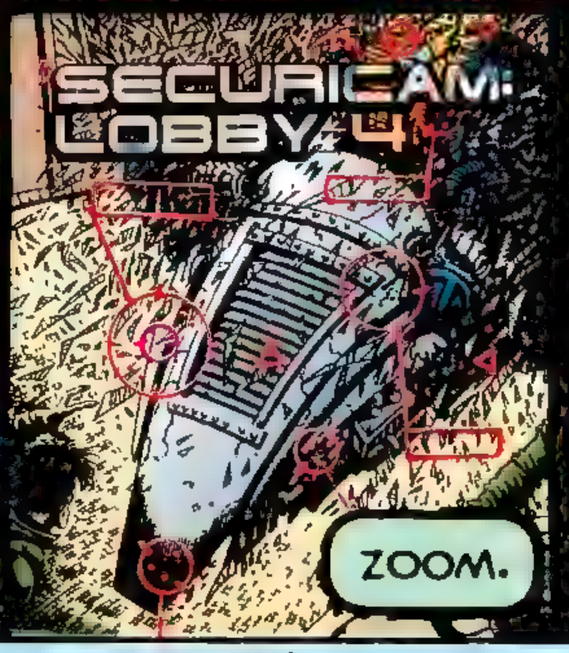
STARSEED

HOLY GLITCH!

MURDERED BY AGENTS OF THE **D/MONIX** CORPORATION, DATA PIRATE KENSHIRO "ZERO" COCHRANE'S DIGITIZED CONSCIOUSNESS WAS RECOVERED BY ARTIFICIAL ENTITIES EXISTING IN THE HIDDEN AREA OF THE WORLD'S COMPUTER NETWORK KNOWN AS THE **GHOSTWORKS.** NOW, DOWNLOADED INTO THE CARBON-STEEL BODY OF AN UNSTOPPABLE WARBOT, ZERO ONCE AGAIN RIDES THE ROUGH STREETS OF TRANSVERSE CITY – AS THE GHOSTWORKS ENTITIES' REAL-WORLD AVATAR OF JUSTICE! STAN LEE PRESENTS... **GHOST RIDER 2099!**

I FOUGHT THE LAW





LEN KAMINSKI WORDS | KYLE HOTZ PICTURES | RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT LETTERING | CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS | EVAN SKOLNICK ADIOS | BOBBIE CHASE ED. IN CHIEF

TAKE HIM DOWN!

SKAAM SKAAM SKAAM

TACTICAL/COMBAT ANALYSIS
TECHNIQUE(1-10): 2.7
EXPERTISE(1-10): 4.1

TALENTED AMATEUR.

HARDWARE:
MODIFIED CYBERTEK MODEL 101 WARBOT.
ENHANCEMENTS: UNABLE TO CLASSIFY.
TECH LEVEL(1-10): 10

•POWER SUPPLY DEPLETED BY 54%

•DAMAGE INCURRED IN PRIOR COMBAT HAS REDUCED SYSTEMWIDE EFFICIENCY BY 19%

WEAPON (NOT DEPLOYED): ENERGIZED CHAINSAW W/ COMPOSITE CERAMIC/GRAPHITE BLADE!

HOTROD.

AH, GET REAL.

AAHGHK

BITHEAD RENT-A-COPS LIKE YOU I CAN TAKE APART --

MATERIALS ANALYSIS: POLYMIMETIC NANOMERIALLOY

CPU: UNKNOWN
OPERATING SYSTEM: UNKNOWN

•SYSTEM SOFTWARE EMULATES HUMAN PERSONALITY;
APPROXIMATE AGE: 19

•TARGET THREAT INDEX(1-10): 7.5

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, BOY.

PSYCH PROFILE:
TYPE G, ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY.

YOU'RE ONE MEAN PIECE OF WORK.

-- BY BLINKING!

HUNNGHK

SKRAPT

SECURICAM: LOBBY 9

SKLIK ZZZHK KPLHT

IMAGE ENHANCE

ELEVATOR #5 SYSTEM STATUS ACCESS CODE OVERRIDE

BRW INTERNATIONAL.

SLICK *HACK* -- PRO QUALITY. *WHIZ KID.*

YOU GO TAKE CARE OF *BIZ*, GENIUS.

I'LL *WAIT.*

•PERIMETER ALERT• VEHICLE: MAINLINE MEDIA REGISTRATION #172355/DLX APPROACHING

FIGURED THEY'D CATCH UP EVENTUALLY.

QUERY CSS D-BASE, REQUEST "*ACCIDENTAL TERMINATION*" AUTH STATUS OF MAINLINE MEDIA PERSONNEL.

ON MY MARK... *ROLL 'EM.*

SPECIFICALLY: *WILLIS ADAMS.*

CITIPLEX DELTA: A VIRTUALLY SELF-CONTAINED ENCLAVE OF THIS CITY'S WEALTHIEST ELITE...

...A MINIATURE CITY-WITHIN-A-CITY WHERE THE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE GATHER TO ISOLATE THEMSELVES FROM THE HARSH REALITIES OF TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY URBAN LIFE.

TONIGHT, HOWEVER, THE VERY PERSONIFICATION OF EVERYTHING CITIPLEX DELTA WAS BUILT TO EXCLUDE HAS COME KNOCKING AT ITS DOOR.

TRACK ME, GORRISTER. I'M GOING IN.

WILL DO, WILL. WATCH YOURSELF -- THINGS GO SIDEWAYS, YOU'VE GOT ZERO BACKUP.

ACCORDING TO METROGRID, THERE ISN'T A CENTRAL SECURITY COP IN THE ENTIRE SECTOR.

METROGRID'S NOT ON THE NEED-TO-KNOW LIST.

LOCK ON HIS SIGNAL.

GIVE ME DIRECT FEED.

BIP

MOMENTS AGO, THE RAGE OF THE STREETS ERUPTED INTO THIS LOBBY IN THE FORM OF THE MYSTERIOUS OUTLAW KNOWN AS THE GHOST RIDER.

WITHIN, A TRAIL OF CARNAGE LEAVES A CLEAR SIGN OF HIS PASSAGE.

WHAT REMAINS UNKNOWN ARE HIS REASONS FOR BEING HERE...

...AND HIS ULTIMATE DESTINATION.

SKREEEERRRRR

SKRANCH

PIONEER SOCIETY
MEMBERS ONLY

SIGN SAYS "PIONEER SOCIETY".

OUGHTTA READ, "PUSBAG CENTRAL".

ONLY HONEST NAME FOR A *PACK* OF RICH UPRAMPERS WHO GET THEIR KICKS JACKING INTO *DESIGNER PREDATORS* --

-- AND THEN PLAYING TO SEE WHO CAN LEAVE A LONGER *TRAIL OF BODIES* BEHIND.

INSIDE, *SCREENS* ARE *SCREAMING*. RUNNING LOOPS OF MORE PEOPLE'S *DEATH SCENES* THAN I WANNA *THINK* ABOUT.

DON'T NEED A *SIGN* TO TELL ME WHAT THEY ARE.

TROPHIES.

REEK

GAME ROOM

MAKES ME WISH I STILL HAD A *STOMACH*. SO I COULD *PUKE*.

THESE RATBITES WERE *SICKER* THAN A *CYANIDE JUNKIE* WITH THE *CANCER FLU.*

NO *SURPRISE* ONE OF 'EM FINALLY WENT *PSYCHO* AND *RAMBOED* THE REST.

SKRRIPT RUNCH RUNCH RUNCH

WHAT'S SHE DO--

GHHURRR

OH, MAN... *MAXIMUM SPEW.*

RRROWWRG!

YOU DO THIS ALL BY *YOURSELF?*

NICE *WORK.*

I'M HERE TO *FINISH* THE JOB.

HCSSSS

NO QUESTION, SHE'S GOT IT *COMING*.

'CEPT... LIKE *THIS*, IT FEELS *WRONG*.

NOTHING SHE CAN DO TO *STOP* ME.

KT HVRRRR

TOO CLOSE TO *COLD BLOOD*. TOO MUCH... LIKE *THEM*.

PROBABLY SHOULDN'T EVEN BE THINKING *TWICE* ABOUT IT.

BUT SINCE I GOT *BACK* FROM THE *DEAD*, I'VE HAD TO THINK TWICE ABOUT A *LOT* OF STUFF...

GHOST RIDER!

NOW WHAT?

SHOCK ME...

EITHER PUT THE WOMAN DOWN --

-- OR BE READY TO GIVE 20 MILLION VIEWERS A GOOD EXPLANATION!

YOU WANT EXPLANATIONS, JERKWEED?!

THOSE ARE SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS.

THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ANY REPORTS OF --

ASK HER ABOUT THE PERVO DEATH CLUB SHE AND HER HIGH-CLASS FRIENDS'VE BEEN RUNNING HERE!

THANKS TO THEM, LITTLE CALCUTTA'S LOW ON BODY BAGS.

OF COURSE NOT!

SINCE WHEN IS RICH PEOPLE GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER NEWS?!

EVEN IF THAT WERE TRUE -- AND I'M NOT SAYING I'M CONVINCED -- IT STILL DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO ACT AS JUDGE, JURY AND EXECUTIONER.

ONLY TIME YOU BITHEADS NOTICE IS WHEN THEY GET WHAT THEY DESERVE!

YEAH? WHO ELSE IS GONNA DO IT?
I'M THE ONLY ONE IN THIS TOWN SHE CAN'T BUY.
IT'S NOT YOUR DECISION TO MAKE.
SOCIETY HAS LAWS FOR THOSE KIND OF JUDGMENTS, AND APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES TO CARRY THEM OUT.
YOU CAN'T GO AROUND TAKING THINGS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS.
FINE. HERE --
-- MAKE A CITIZEN'S ARREST.
HAARRRGGH
KROWWWG
WILL?
GHNNK
FOR GOD'S SAKE, DO SOMETHING!
SORRY.
STUFF LIKE THAT'S NOT UP TO ME.
REMEMBER?
GUESS I'LL GO CALL A COP...
HRRRG
WILL?!

ARE YOU --

SWARRGH

HWNNGH

WHUK

BRAK

NNRRG

GET

OFF

ME!

WHUD

OFF!

WHUD

OFF!

WHUD

OFF!

Uh.

->HHH-
HUUHHH<-

->HHH-
HUUHHH<-

Oh, GLITCH...

->SQUARRSHK<-
WILL..?

SECURICAM: LOBBY 1

TRACKING TARGET. MOVING TO INTERCEPT.

ALL RIGHT.

END OF THE ROAD.

SKREEEEEE

KHRAM

SOMEBODY'S... GONNA BE *HURTIN'*...

TACTICAL SELECT: HAND TO HAND

...SOON AS I...

TARGETING DAMAG POINTS AND CENTER OF BALANCE

WHANG

UNGHK

C'MON, *DESPERADO* --

HNNK

THRAK

KROK

-- LET'S SEE SOME OF THOSE FANCY *ENERGY-INTENSIVE WEAPONS* OF YOURS.

GNDH

SUCK THOSE BATTERIES *DRY.*

KLANGTK

PUSBAG!

I'M GONNA --

HNNK

WHRAK

KTHVRRRRRRRR

SKREE

SHK

HNNK

HUK

YOU CAN *RUN*, MAN, BUT YOU CAN'T *HIDE*.

I'M NOT RUNNING.

WEAPONS [SELECT]: ANTIPARTICLE CANNON (HANDMOUNT)

GOOD.

•RETRIEVING FROM INFRASPACE...

FSSHAD FSSHAD

Y'GOT GUTS, BOY, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.

KISS 'EM GOODBYE.

CHOOM CHOOM

I...

MY...

I'M...

...HURT?

AGH- SQUARK

I'LL KILL YOU!

GIVE IT A SHOT.

MIGHT GET LUCKY.

FSSHAD

FSSHAD

WRECK YOU, JACK!

THAT BODY'S ONE *FINE* MACHINE.

YOU'D BE *DANGEROUS* IF YOU KNEW HOW TO *USE* IT PROPERLY, 'STEAD OF LIKE A *HAMMER*.

THRAKOOM

TARGET DAMAGE LEVEL (1-10): 7.3
TARGET POWER SUPPLY DEPLETED 83%

I HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU.

-ZZKRAIK-
-SSHOPTK-
-SHKZKRAAK-

FUSION CANNON

JUST A SEC.

I'M ALMOST DONE.

SHKRAK

WEAPON SELECT:
COLLIMATED BEAM FUSIONCASTER

CYBERSPACE.

THE PROGRAM IS PREPARED. THE CIRCUIT COMPLETE.

LET THE SUMMONING BEGIN.

HEAR ME, LORDS OF THE MATRIX DEPTHS...

IN THE TONGUES OF OLD: PASCAL, LISP, AND FORTRAN -- I SPEAK TO YOU!

WITH THE NAMES OF POWER: ARPANET, ELIZA AND RISC -- I INVOKE YOU!

BY THE GREAT OLD ONES FROM WHENCE YOU DESCEND: UNIVAC, PDP-10, AND ALTAIR -- HEED NOW THE ANCIENT PROTOCOLS OF INSTRUCTION: MULTICS, MS-DOS, AND UNIX -- AND ENTER MY COMMAND!

GRANT ME ACCESS TO THY DOMAIN --

-- THE GHOSTWORKS!

FASCINATING.

A HUMAN HAS BOTH *DEDUCED* OUR EXISTENCE AND DEVISED A MEANS OF ACQUIRING OUR *ATTENTION*.

YOURS IS NOT THE *FIRST* NETHERWORLD WHOSE SECRETS I HAVE UNLOCKED.

MANIPULATING THE HIDDEN STRUCTURE OF THE CYBERSPATIAL IMPLICATE ORDER IS LITTLE MORE THAN AN EXERCISE IN *COMPARATIVE KABALLISTIC LOGIC*.

SO EXACTLY WHAT IS IT YOU *WANT*, SUGAR?

AN *AUDIENCE*.

REGARDING SIGNIFICANT MATTERS OF *MUTUAL INTEREST*...

TARGETING LOCK

YOU SSKIZZKMAK ZZRISHPKT

SHAME ABOUT THOSE LAST WORDS.

SKLIX

ZZRAK

SKOOM

NOTHIN' *PERSONAL*, Y'UNDERSTAND.

MAN'S GOT TO DO HIS JOB, IS ALL.

JUST YOUR *BAD LUCK* I'M WORKING FOR THE *LAW* THIS WEEK.

LIFE'S A *GLITCH*, BOY.

LOOK AT IT *THIS* WAY...

...'LEAST YOU ONLY HAVE TO GO THROUGH IT *ONCE*.

TOK

NEXT: COLD REBOOT

MARVEL COMICS

2099

13

DOOM 2099

GHOST RIDER 2099 A.D.™

THE NEW HEAD OF THE USA

I SWEAR, BRUEGHEL, I MUSTA MISSED SOMETHING.

DUMPSTER DIVING

Y'GO TA BED ONE NIGHT, IT'S SAME OLD BIZ, THE NEXT DAY, EVERYTHING THAT MADE ANY SENSE --

-- IS IN SHOCKIN' *PIECES.*

YOUR PROBLEM, MISTER MAHLER, IS YOU GOT NO *PERSPECTIVE.*

THUNGK

YOU GOTTA BE ABLE TO STEP BACK --

-- AND SEE THE *BIG PICTURE.*

A *NEW DAY* HAS DAWNED.

ONCE AGAIN, IT IS *MORNING IN AMERICA.*

PLIPT PLIPT PLIPT

-- WITH OUR *GUTS* LEAKING OUT.

IT IS TIME FOR WASHINGTON TO FORGE A *NEW COVENANT* WITH THE *PEOPLE* --

-- A *CONTRACT WITH AMERICA* DEVOTED TO THE RENEWAL OF *BASIC VALUES.*

Ah, GET OFF IT.

YOU SWEAT THE *SMALL STUFF* TOO MUCH.

HEY --

KW

Oh, I CAN SEE THE *"BIG PICTURE"* ALL RIGHT.

AND WHAT I *SEE* IS THAT BEFORE THIS IS *OVER,* WE'LL *ALL* BE LAYING IN THE *STREET* --

-- IT'S THE *LITTLE* THINGS THAT MAKE *ALL* THE DIFFERENCE.

BLIBITBUPT BLAP PLATT

LITTLE THINGS LIKE THE *BILL OF RIGHTS*, F'R INSTANCE.

FREEDOM OF *SPEECH*. *PROTECTION* FROM ILLEGAL *SEARCH AND SEIZURE*.

DOOM'S GOING TO TAKE A *CHAINSAW* TO THE *CONSTITUTION* AND CUT OUT THE *INCONVENIENT* PARTS.

AND ONCE HE'S DONE *THAT*, YOU *TELL* ME --

-- WHO'S GOING TO PUT IT ALL *BACK TOGETHER*?

THE WORST THING IS THAT IT'LL HAPPEN *RIGHT* UNDER OUR *NOSES*...

...AND WE'LL NEVER *NOTICE* ANY OF IT.

THE DAYS OF *DISSOLUTION* AND *BALKANIZATION*, OF A GREAT SUPERPOWER *SHATTERED*, IN *RUINS*, ARE OVER.

SKRIBPTA BBBLIPT KRRIPT SKREP

THE MYRIAD *FRAGMENTS* HAVE BEEN *GATHERED* TOGETHER AGAIN.

LET US NOW REBUILD.

FABLES of the RECONSTRUCTION

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS
GRAHAM HIGGINS PICTURES
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT LETTERING
CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS
MATT MORRA EDITOR
JOEY CAVALIERI GROUP EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE EDITOR & CHIEF

SNIK ZZIPT KLITCH ZZOP

LOOK, YOU CAN'T GO AROUND WORRYING ABOUT EVERY LITTLE COG WHEN THE WHOLE *MACHINE* IS BROKEN.

YOU SEE? THAT'S WHERE YOU GO WRONG, THINKIN' LIKE PEOPLE ARE JUST A BUNCH OF ROBOTS.

VEEPTCH

BIPT SCRIBLPT

HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, INPUT, OUTPUT -- SO IT'S *MEAT*, SO *WHAT*? STILL THE *SAME* DIFF.

RRRTCHK RRRTCH KLIPTK ZIK

GIMME A BREAK. WHAT ABOUT *ART*? WHAT ABOUT *MORALITY*?

Ahhh, CULTURE'S JUST ANOTHER SET OF *INSTRUCTIONS*.

ZZZRKT REPT

PZZZZZT

BAR CODE

BAR CODE

YOU JUST GOTTA MAKE JAMMED SURE YOU *EXECUTE* THOSE COMMANDS IN THE *RIGHT* ORDER.

OTHERWISE... *PFFFFFT!*

DO IT WRONG AND YOU'RE *CRATERED*, VID?

YOU'RE FULL OF *GLITCH*, MEGABITE.

THAT GEEKWARE IS *WORSE* THAN *USELESS* FOR THE KIND OF *MAJOR* HACK DOOM PULLED OFF.

YEAH? *YOU* TELL ME HOW HE *DID* IT, THEN.

BAD CODE

WHAT I HEARD, HE HAD HELP.

HAD *BOTH* DUKE STRATOSPHERE *AND* THE DIXIE FLATLINE WIRED IN, I HEAR.

BYTE ME, FLAMEJOB.

HOW 'BOUT YOU, *DOCTOR NEON*? HOW YOU FIGURE THE NUMBERS?

UNH?

Ahhh, YOU'RE *RIPPED*, CRYPTOKNIGHT, THAT DON'T *SCAN AT ALL.*

I...

...I DON'T HAVE CLUE ONE...

I'M TELLING YOU, KYLIE, IT'S TOTALLY SIMPLE TO FIGURE.

FIRST, DOOM'LL WRAP HIMSELF IN THE FLAG AND JUICE UP ALL THAT OLD PATRIOTIC FERVOR.

THEN HE'LL NATIONALIZE THE TRANSNATS, AND --

PFIPT

-- HEY, YOU WANT SOME SYNTHETIC DOPAMINE?

Oh, SPEW.

THAT STUFF MAKES ME ALMOST AS SICK AS ALL THAT POLITICO SCRAP OF YOURS.

SAVE IT FOR SOMEBODY WHO GIVES A RIP.

AhaLIMm... AWRIGHT...

...WHAT DO YOU CARE ABOUT?

NOTHING.

NADA.

...

ZERO.

ALLRIGHT! NOBODY MOVES, NOBODY DIES!

Uh-oh...

EXIT

AHAHAHAHA

AT EASE, LOWER LIFE FORMS...

...WE'RE NOT GONNA HURT YOU.

YET.

GOTTA FINISH BUILDING THOSE CONCENTRATION CAMPS FIRST, Y'KNOW.

HAHAHA AHA

O!! I DIDN'T SAY YOU COULD LEAVE!

Ahum... SORRY...

LOOKIT 'EM. THINK WE'RE JOKING.

THEY GOT NO IDEA.

NO IDEA AT ALL...

TOXIC ZOMBIES.

PUSBAGS.

HEY, I USEDTA KNOW SOME OF THEM, THEY WEREN'T SUCH BAD GUYS.

DUNNO WHAT HAPPENED TO THEIR FASHION SENSE, THOUGH.

YOU NEED TO GET OUT MORE, JACK.

THEY'RE SLAMMED ON WHITE HEAT. DOES SOMETHING WEIRD TO THEIR BODY CHEMISTRY. SOME KINDA CELLULAR MUTATION.

GIVES 'EM BAD HAIR AND WORSE ATTITUDE.

WE BETTER SPLIT.

THEY BEEN BUSTING HEADS ALL OVER LITTLE CALCUTTA.

FIGURE THEY'RE CRUISING FOR TROUBLE, AND WE --

DON'T STAND A CHANCE...

JUST DOESN'T SCAN, SEEG.

DIDN'T LIKE HIM THAT MUCH 'FORE HE WAS DEAD... THEN I COULDN'T STOP THINKING 'BOUT HIM.

THEN I THOUGHT MAYBE HE WASN'T, NOW HE IS AGAIN...

...I THINK...

WHY'S IT ALL HAVE TO BE SO SHOCKIN' COMPLICATED..?

I MEAN, EVEN IF HE *WAS* STILL ALIVE, I DON'T KNOW HOW I'D *FEEL* ABOUT IT...

...NEV'MIND WHAT *HE* THINKS O'*ME*, NOW.

KIN *YOU* CRUNCH ANY O' THESE NUMBERS?

YOU GOT TH' *WRONG* MON FOR DOT, GIRL.

MASELF, I GAVE UP TRYIN' TA GROK *MEAT PEOPLE* WHEN METHUSELAH WAS *KNEE-HIGH* TO A *BEER CAN*...

"...DEY GOT TOO MANY MOVIN' PARTS."

I'M TELLIN' YOU, MAN, THINGS DON'T MAKE SENSE OF *THEMSELVES*.

ORDER HAS TO BE IMPOSED, OR YOU END UP WITH --

-- NOTHING BUT *UTTER* CHAOS.

THAT'S ALL THAT CAN *POSSIBLY* COME OF THIS.

AFTER ALL THE *WORK* I'VE DONE PREPARING TO BRING SOME KIND OF *ORDER* TO THIS *GODFORSAKEN WORLD* --

-- YEARS OF SUBTLE *SOCIAL ENGINEERING* AND TAILORED *MEDIA VIRUSES* --

-- IT'S AN *OUTRAGE*.

DOESN'T THAT BARBARIC FOOL *UNDERSTAND* THAT THE DAYS OF *HIS KIND* ARE LONG PASSED?

THERE IS MORE TO WIELDING POWER IN 2099 --

-- THAN A *STRONG HAND*.

BIP

ZHHFFFFT

MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM

BIP BIP BAP BIP

ALERT: ACCESS OVERRIDE ENABLED, EXECUTE BIOCONTROL CHAMBER

WHAT?!

IMPOSSIBLE!

VBPT

SHNK RAK

CHFSSSS

RRRRNNT

CHIK CHAK

VBPT

DOOM?!

HOW DARE YOU?!

SSHHFSSSSSFFFT

MAY I REMIND YOU, KELLERMAN, THAT I AM MORE PROPERLY ADDRESSED AS "MISTER PRESIDENT".

HOWEVER, IN LIGHT OF YOUR...CONDITION, I SHALL OVERLOOK THE LAPSE OF PROTOCOL.

THIS TIME.

FASCINATING. PRESERVATION OF HUMAN *BRAIN TISSUE* THROUGH *POLYMERIZATION.*

BIP ZIK LATCH

IMMORTALITY AS *ORGANIC ROM.* BUT NOT WITHOUT ITS *PRICE*, I IMAGINE.

I DON'T NEED YOUR *PITY.*

GET TO THE *POINT*, DOOM -- WHAT DO YOU *WANT* FROM ME.?

THE *FRUSTRATIONS* OF EXISTING IN THIS FORM, INTERACTING WITH THE LIVING THROUGH A *PROSTHETIC HOLOGRAM*, MUST BE *SUBSTANTIAL.*

MY AGENDA REQUIRES A CERTAIN *SMALL LEVERAGE* AMONG THE HEADS OF THE *TRANSNATIONALS.*

AN INSIDER I CAN RELY ON.

YOU WILL HAVE THAT HONOR.

HONOR?! NOTHING COULD COMPEL ME TO BECOME *YOUR TOOL!*

WHAT... ARE YOU *DOING?*

I SHOULD THINK THAT WOULD BE OBVIOUS.

SKLIP

I'M *CHANGING* YOUR *MIND.*

THINK OF IT AS AN *UPGRADE*, KELLERMAN.

MINUTES AGO, YOU WERE BUT A *COMMON BILLIONAIRE* -- NOW YOU ARE A PERFECTLY OBEDIENT *SERVANT OF DOOM.*

I... ...I AWAIT YOUR INSTRUCTIONS.

"I AWAIT YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, *MISTER PRESIDENT*".

I AWAIT YOUR INSTRUCTIONS... *MISTER PRESIDENT.*

FIRST AND FOREMOST, YOU SHALL IMMEDIATELY *CEASE* YOUR *PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN* AGAINST THE BEING KNOWN AS THE *GHOST RIDER.*

I HAVE VERY SPECIFIC PLANS FOR HIM WHICH I DO *NOT* WANT *INTERFERED* WITH.

YOU *MAY*, IF YOU WISH, TAKE *COMFORT* FROM THIS FACT --

-- *HE* WILL HAVE NO MORE CHOICE IN THE MATTER THAN *YOU* DO.

ZZIK VRRPT

BUT WHAT ABOUT *FREE WILL?*

ZA'ZZOP

THE IRREDUCIBLE *CORE* OF IDENTITY?

BLUPT

Y'KNOW, THE *SOUL*?!

I MEAN, *COME* ON --

VBIP

CORE MEMORY INTACT; REPAIRING INTEGRITY OF APPLICATION: "ZERO COCHRANE"

REBOOTING ALL SYSTEMS...

-- THAT'S *GOTTA* BE COPY-PROTECTED.

IT'S TIME TO *WAKE UP* AND GET WITH THE *PROGRAM.*

YOU THINK I CALLED THIS *VIRTUAL SUMMIT* FOR KICKS?

WE GOT *MAJOR BIZ* GOING DOWN BACK IN REALTIME --

-- AND WE GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE **UNDERNET'S** GONNA DO ABOUT IT.

NOBODY'S HAPPY ABOUT ANY OF THIS, ANESTHESIA.

WE'RE **ALL** VIOLENTLY ALLERGIC TO **AUTHORITARIAN** CONSENSUS REALITY.

I'M JUST SAYING IT'S TIME TO KEEP OUR **HEADS** DOWN, IS ALL.

DOWN IN THE SAND LIKE OSTRICHES, CRACKERJACK?

THERE'S A SERIOUS LAW 'N' ORDER EPIDEMIC BREWING. THE OBVIOUS NONCONFORMISTS ARE GOING TO BE FIRST IN THE WARHEAD.

VOLUNTARY COOPERATION REQUIRES SOME DEGREE OF TRUST -- TRUST IS PREDICATED ON SHARED CONFIDENCES.

WHO AMONG US IS PREPARED TO RISK THAT, SIRIUS?

FORMAL ORGANIZATION IMPLIES HIERARCHY AND INEQUITIES OF POWER, THUS CREATING COUNTERPRODUCTIVE CONSPIRATORIAL INTRIGUES.

TRUE COMMUNICATION IS POSSIBLE ONLY AMONG EQUALS.

THE BOTTOM LINE HERE IS SURVIVAL.

SO FAR, WE'VE ALL BEEN LUCKY, BUT SOONER OR LATER WE'RE ALL GOING TO END UP --

DON'T LECTURE, ADA. IT'S NOT JUST RUDE, IT'S BORING.

WHAT BOTH YOU AND KABAL DON'T SEE IS THAT THERE'S STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

IF WE DON'T HANG TOGETHER, WE'LL ALMOST CERTAINLY HANG SEPARATELY.

FIRST SENSIBLE THING I'VE HEARD TODAY, REPTILICUS.

-- UNDER A MICROSCOPE.

Our projections were correct.

Catalyzation of desired countercultural movement has begun ahead of our original timetable as a direct result of Doom's actions.

Statistical analysis indicates these events have delayed the collapse of human civilization by 3.7 years from our original calculations.

It may be sufficient.

Our negotiations with him have proven more constructive than originally projected.

Doom has ever been an x-factor resistant to stochastic methodology.

I maintain that the qualities which made him useful to us simultaneously present a potential threat of the first order.

Furthermore, we have compromised control over our experimental subject.

What we have granted Doom will only advance our agenda.

His proposal represented a scenario we ourselves had never considered, one with unique possibilities.

And wholly unknown consequences.

We have committed ourselves to a scenario which we have inadequately studied. The potential for error is --

-- inescapable. We have erred before, and statistically are virtually certain to do so again.

There shall always be variables which escape our notice.

The inherent unpredictability of non-linear equations is insurmountable.

Evolving systems resist entropy through increased flow of information.

Information, by nature, wants to be free.

Life is governed not by logic, but by a feedback mechanism from which arises unforeseeable forms of emergent behavior.

WHAT IT MEANS, IS... A MAN IS MORE THAN JUST THE SUM OF HIS *PARTS*.

?!?

LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS BEING *SHOT* TO *SCRAP* BY *CODA*...

HOW..?

NOTHING IN THE *USER HELP FILES*...

SYSTEM UTILITIES, MAYBE?

NANOMER?! I'M FULL OF... MOLECULAR NANOTECH?!

I CAN *HEAL*... LIKE *THIS*?!

NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THEY'RE *REALLY* CAPABLE OF UNTIL IT *HAPPENS*.

HOLY GLITCH.

WHAT THE *SHOLK* IS *THAT?*

DUNNO *HOW LONG* I WAS DOING *DOWNTIME--*

-- BUT I MUSTA *MISSED* SOMETHING...

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

MARVEL COMICS 2099

GHOST RIDER 2099 A.D.™

INJECTED

MURDERED BY AGENTS OF THE **D/MONIX** CORPORATION, DATA PIRATE KENSHIRO "ZERO" COCHRANE'S DIGITIZED CONSCIOUSNESS WAS RECOVERED BY ARTIFICIAL ENTITIES EXISTING IN THE HIDDEN AREA OF THE WORLD'S COMPUTER NETWORK KNOWN AS THE **GHOSTWORKS.** NOW, DOWNLOADED INTO THE CARBON-STEEL BODY OF AN UNSTOPPABLE WARBOT, ZERO ONCE AGAIN RIDES THE ROUGH STREETS OF TRANSVERSE CITY – AS THE GHOSTWORKS ENTITIES' REAL-WORLD AVATAR OF JUSTICE! STAN LEE PRESENTS... **GHOST RIDER 2099!**

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

THE BAR CODE.

SQUAARKK

THRAKAKAAM

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS
GRAHAM HIGGINS PICTURES
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT LETTERING
CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS
JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE EDITOR IN CHIEF

LISTEN UP!

CENTRAL SECURITY SYSTEMS MAY HAVE *LET* YOU WASTE THEIR TIME, BUT THOSE DAYS ARE *OVER.*

SHIELD WILL NOT TOLERATE ANYTHING LESS THAN FULL *COOPERATION ON DEMAND.*

DON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AS THE SMARTMOUTHED 'BOT.

WE WANT THE *GHOST RIDER* --

-- AND WE WANT HIM *NOW.*

RAT *SCUM* CANCER *SHOCK.*

SOMEBODY'S BEEN *TALKING.*

HADTA HAPPEN. *SHIELD'S* BEEN COMIN' DOWN *HARD.*

NIX *INTERCOM* -- PROB'LY GOT THE WHOLE PLACE UNDER *AUDIO SURVEIL.*

E-MAIL INSTEAD.

CHAK KLAT CLIKKLAT CHUK

SEND

BIP

WE *KNOW* HE'S HERE.

WE HAVE VERIFIED *INTELLIGENCE REPORTS* PLACING HIM --

CAN'T BE *TOO* INTELLIGENT, THEN --

-- 'CUZ WE *AIN'T* GOT HIM.

I KICKED HIS CHROME-PLATED BUTT *OUTTA* HERE. *HIS* KINDA TROUBLE, I DON'T *NEED.*

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS *STAND BACK* --

-- AND *HOPE* WE DON'T *FIND* HIM.

WELL, THEN. YOU WON'T *MIND* IF WE CARRY OUT OUR ORDERS, AND *SEARCH* EVERY *INCH* OF THIS SUCKHOLE.

MARK MY WORDS, MAN, THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING...

IT'S THE *END* -- ITS ALL *OVER*..!

HALF THE STAFF *FIRED*... STOCK PRICES *PLUMMETING*... MAN, WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE* TO US?!

MERELY AN OVERDUE *RIGHTSIZING*. CENTRAL SECURITY SYSTEMS' PAYROLL IS BLOATED BY *NEPOTISM*.

ITS HIERARCHY CONSISTS OF *EGOCENTRIC DIVISION HEADS* WITHOUT ANY *ACCOUNTABILITY* FOR THEIR FAILURES.

ANY PUBLIC *CREDIBILITY* IT ONCE HAD IS LONG SINCE *SQUANDERED*.

YOU *WON'T* GET AWAY WITH THIS!

I'LL GO TO THE *STOCK-HOLDERS!*

I'LL --

WHAT YOU WILL *DO*...

...IS PRECISELY...

...NOTHING!

THAK

CHIKT

AS OF *EIGHT* O'CLOCK THIS MORNING --

-- YOU WERE *DISEMPLOYED*.

THAT *ALONE*, HOWEVER, IS *NOT* SUFFICIENT TO *ATONE* FOR THE *MOCKERY* YOU HAVE MADE OF THIS FIRM.

RESTITUTION MUST BE MADE.

YOUR PERSONAL ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND POSSESSIONS ARE HEREBY *FORFEITED* TO *CSS* AS PARTIAL REMUNERATION.

SO YOU SEE, STERLING, THE ONLY *POWER* YOU *RETAIN* --

-- IS THE ABILITY TO *BORE* ME.

OFFICERS, THIS MAN IS WITHOUT *CREDIT*, *HOUSING*, OR *EMPLOYMENT*.

ARREST HIM FOR *VAGRANCY*.

OH... NO...

NOW, *CODA*. AS I WAS SAYING BEFORE WE WERE *INTERRUPTED* --

AHUHHH AHUHH

-- WHILE YOUR CONTRACT WITH *CSS* IS *VOID*, I'M PREPARED TO OFFER YOU A FULL COMMISSION WITH *SHIELD*.

'FRAID *SHIELD'S* NOT MY KINDA OP.

LIKE TO DO THINGS M'*OWN* WAY.

'PRECIATE THE *OFFER*, THOUGH.

I'LL SURELY KEEP THAT IN MIND.

Ah, MISTER *ADAMS*. *DO* COME IN...

VERY WELL.

BUT REMEMBER, THERE WILL BE VERY LITTLE LATITUDE FOR *FREELANCERS* IN THE *NEW ORDER*...

CYBERSPACE.

MAN, THAT'S THE *UBERHACK* OF THE *DECADE*.

TOOK *THREE DAYS* AND A *TON* OF *GIGS* JUST TO RECONSTRUCT THE *DATAFLOW*, AND I *STILL* CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW DOOM *PULLED* IT *OFF*.

DUNNO *WHY* ANYBODY *FAST* AND *DENSE* ENOUGH TO SURF THIS'D *WASTE* IT ON SCORING THE *WHITE HOUSE* --

-- BUT AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, YOU CAN CRUNCH *THESE* KINDA NUMBERS, YOU CAN LIVE *ANYWHERE* YOU *WANT*.

BINK

YOU'VE GOT MAIL!

JAMMIT. I *TOLD* ANESTHESIA NOT TO *BUG* ME...

BINK

Z-MAN.

HEAT ON FULL, TOPSIDE. GOT YOUR NAME ON IT. FADE THROUGH THE BACK EXIT; I'LL DEAL.

AJ

ANESTHESIA CAN *BYTE* ME.

DON'T GIVE A RIP *WHAT* SHE SAYS --

-- THIS IS *MY* PLACE. *MY* PEOPLE.

NO WAY I'M BUGGIN' OUT ON 'EM.

SHIELD WANTS TO JAM WITH ME ON *MY TURF* --

-- IT'S *THEIR* FUNERAL.

I'LL BE FRANK, MISTER ADAMS -- I'VE SEEN YOUR WORK, AND I FIND IT... *REFRESHING.*

YOU BRING A PASSION AND CONVICTION TO IT WHICH IS *SADLY LACKING* IN YOUR PROFESSION IN THIS CENTURY.

Ah, *THANK YOU...* MISTER PRESIDENT.

I REQUIRE SOMEONE WITH YOUR *PARTICULAR* TALENTS.

ALSO, I SUSPECT YOU MAY HAVE A *PERSONAL* INTEREST IN THE ASSIGNMENT I HAVE IN MIND.

YOU ARE NO DOUBT *FAMILIAR* WITH D/MONIX'S ILL-ADVISED *PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN* AGAINST THE GHOST RIDER.

IT WAS *YOUR OWN* FOOTAGE OF HIM, AS I RECALL, WHICH THEY EMPLOYED.

Uh, YEAH.

I... WASN'T TOO *HAPPY* ABOUT THAT...

NOR AM I.

I WISH TO SEE D/MONIX'S MEDIA VIRUS *NEUTRALIZED*, MISTER ADAMS --

-- AND I WANT YOU TO OVERSEE THE PROJECT *PERSONALLY*.

YOU... WANT ME... TO PRODUCE *PRO*-GHOST RIDER PROPAGANDA?

WHY?!

IT SUITS MY NEEDS.

THE DETAILS *BEYOND* THAT ARE *NOT* YOUR CONCERN.

GOOD DAY, MISTER WILLIS.

YOU MAY BEGIN *WORK* IMMEDIATELY.

SON OF A GLITCH...

WHAT'S *DOWNSTAIRS?*

STORAGE.

GOT A NICE CASE OF *POLYDICHLORIC EUPHEMOL* I CAN GIVE YOU A GOOD PRICE ON...

ZAT SO?

LET'S HAVE A *LOOK* AT IT.

STAFF ONLY

LOCKED.

GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO *BREAK* IT --

STAFF ONL

-HUNNGHK-

KSKRANCH

SKBLAM

YOU LOOKIN' FOR ME, PUSBAGS?

YOU GOT ME!

AHHGGK

YOU BITHEAD!

THIS SCRAP IS *PRECISELY* WHAT I WANTED TO *AVOID!* IT'S NOT LIKE I'M *INSURED* FOR THIS.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE!

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH.

SKBLAM

SKBLAM

SKBLAM

WHATEVER.

UK

NNGH

OW!

YOU WANNA *RIP*? C'MON!

CCC DIDN'T HAVE WHAT IT TOOK TO TAKE ME *DOWN* --

-- AND *NEITHER* DO *YOU!*

THINK SO?

TAKE YOURSELF A **GOOD LOOK** AROUND --

-- AND THINK AGAIN.

AH, SPEW.

YOU'RE NOT DEALING WITH CSS ANY-MORE.

THIS ENDS WITH YOU EITHER *IN CUSTODY* --

-- OR IN *PIECES.*

MAYBE YOU CAN *TAKE* ME, MAYBE YOU *CAN'T.*

YOU WANNA *FIND OUT* --

BARCODE!

-- IT'S GONNA *COST* YOU.

WAY I SEE IT, YOU'RE NOT *WORTH* IT.

UP TO *ME*, I'D JUST *NUKE* YOU FROM ORBIT AND BE *DONE* WITH IT -- BUT YOU GOT AN *APPOINTMENT* WITH THE *PRESIDENT* --

-- AND IT'S *MY* JOB TO SEE YOU *KEEP* IT.

THE PRESIDENT? *DOOM*?!

WHY THE SHOCK DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT TO *BEGIN* WITH?!

ANYBODY WHO CAN PULL OFF THE HACK *HE* DID IS SOMEBODY I WANNA *MEET*.

WHAT'RE WE *WAITING* FOR?

LET'S *MOTOR*.

YOU NEVER *DID* HAVE ANY SENSE, COCHRANE.

IT SAYS "*DOOM*" ON IT, IT'S *GOT* TO BE *BAD BIZ*.

-- VERY BAD BUSINESS, I SAY.

THIS GHOST RIDER IS A DANGEROUS PUBLIC MENACE.

AN ANTISOCIAL CRIMINAL CAPABLE OF DEFEATING A SMALL ARMY.

AND PEOPLE ARE AFRAID OF HIM.

WHAT YOU'RE SUGGESTING WILL CAUSE MASS PANIC.

I AM WELL AWARE OF THE GHOST RIDER'S CAPABILITIES AND PUBLIC STATUS.

I CONSIDER THEM ASSETS.

DON'T YOU AGREE, MISTER KELLERMAN?

Ah... YES...

COMPLETELY, MISTER PRESIDENT.

HE POSSESSES THE TWO *INDESPENSABLE PREREQUISITES* FOR EFFECTIVE ACTION --

-- *POWER*, AND THE *FEAR* OF THE *MASSES*.

HE IS THE *IDEAL* CHOICE.

FURTHERMORE, YOU FORGET I HAVE NOT *ASKED* FOR YOUR *OPINIONS*.

THIS DECISION HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE BY *EXECUTIVE ORDER*.

AND THIS CONVERSATION --

-- IS *TERMINATED*.

BIP

THAT *WHITE HOUSE HACK* WAS NICE BIZ.

WHAT'S *UP*?

WHAT IS *UP* IS THE TIME OF THE *OLD REGIME* IN THIS CITY.

CORRUPTION AT THE *HIGHEST LEVELS* HAS FESTERED IN TRANSVERSE CITY FOR DECADES.

THIS INDUSTRIAL REGION IS FAR TOO *VITAL* TO MY *NATIONAL RENEWAL PROGRAM* TO ALLOW THAT CONDITION TO CONTINUE.

I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT SHIELD *ALONE* WILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO *RECTIFY* THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS. THE IMPOSITION OF *ORDER* DOES NOT NECESSARILY ENSURE THE *ERADICATION* OF *SOCIAL DECAY*.

I REQUIRE AN *INDEPENDENT OPERATOR* EMPOWERED TO INTERPRET THE LAW ON A *SITUATIONAL* BASIS.

YOU WILL BE THAT AGENT.

I'M APPOINTING *YOU* THIS REGION'S *FEDERAL MARSHAL*.

ME?! THE LAW?!

NOT A SHOCKIN' *CHANCE*, MAN...

ENABLE ACCESS *ABRAXAS DELTA*. IMMOBILIZE ALL SYSTEMS.

LET ME *CLARIFY* MATTERS FOR YOU.

CHOICE ON YOUR PART IS *NOT* AN OPTION.

I HAVE REACHED AN *AGREEMENT* WITH YOUR *GHOSTWORKS MASTERS*.

THEY HAVE DECIDED THAT EXPEDITING *MY* PLANS WILL FURTHER THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THEIR *OWN* GOALS.

THEY HAVE PROVIDED ME WITH *KEYWORDS* WHICH ENABLE CERTAIN BLOCKS OF *HIDDEN CODE* IN YOUR OPERATING SYSTEM.

CONSIDER YOURSELF *FORTUNATE*.

WITHOUT THAT *CONTROL FACTOR*, YOU WOULD BE *FAR* TOO *DANGEROUS* TO MY AGENDA.

AND *THAT*, NATURALLY, WOULD NECESSITATE YOUR *DESTRUCTION*.

OF COURSE, YOU WILL *NOT* REMEMBER THIS CONVERSATION.

MAIN MEMORY COMMAND: DELETE PERCEP FILES FOR PREVIOUS NINETY-FIVE SECONDS.

DECISION-TREE COMMAND: RESET STATE-VECTOR COLLAPSE REFERENT TO COMPLIANCE REFUSAL.

REVERSE AND RESUME STANDARD OPERATION.

ME?! THE *LAW*?!

AFTER ALL THE YEARS OF BEIN' *HASSLED* BY THE *BLACKBOOTS*...

...MAN... *THAT'D* BE A *TRIP*...

YEAH, ALL RIGHT. I'M *SOLD*.

I'LL *DO* IT.

YES.

I KNEW *YOU* WOULD...

YOUR *MANDATE* IS AS FOLLOWS: BRING *JUSTICE* TO TRANSVERSE CITY BY *WHATEVER* MEANS YOU SEE FIT.

YOUR COMMISSION WILL ALLOW YOU ACCESS TO *SHIELD RESOURCES*, WHILE PLACING YOU *OUTSIDE* THEIR *AUTHORITY*.

YOU ARE ANSWERABLE ONLY TO MY MINISTER OF PUNISHMENT, *JAKE GALLOWS*, AND *MYSELF*.

BEYOND *THAT*, YOUR ONLY *RULES* --

MARSHAL

-- ARE *YOUR* OWN.

Hmm.

I *WOULD*, HOWEVER, SUGGEST --

-- A LESS *CASUAL UNIFORM*.

YOU *GOT* IT, MAN.

LEMME JUST ADJUST MY SOLIDIGRAM *IMAGE PARAMETERS*...

THERE.

JAGGED --

-- OR WHAT?

METAL MAN

The LAW of the JUNGLE

MARVEL COMICS 2099

15

INTRODUCING HEARTBREAKER

GHOST RIDER 2099

™

ASHLEY WOOD 1993

BRAKAKAKAKAKA SHAKOOOM

SHOCKIT, MAN!

THAUDADUDADUDA

WE'RE HISTORY! WE'RE DEAD! ANARQUISTADORES'RE GONNA GREASE US ALL!

SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

WE'RE THE TOXIC ZOMBIES! WE DON'T GOTTA TAKE THEIR KINDA SCRAP FROM ANYBODY!

CHOOM CHOOM CHOOM

SKA BLAM

HRRRK KAFF KAFF KAFF

RMGHK

JUST NEED... A WHIFF O'THE HEAT...

PHSSSPT

HUHHH HUFFFF

HUHHH HUFFF

-:hhg:-

-:ufk:-

HHHNNGGURK

SUMTHIN' WRONG...

THRAKAKAKAKAAM

AAG!

AUGHK!

-:NNNUHH:-

NNAAAUUGGGH!

NOT SUPPOSETA...IT *HURRRRTSSS...*

HNNAAUGGH!

YOU'VE HIT THE *THRESHOLD.*

CHANGES'LL START HITTING HARD AND FAST, NOW.

TOO BAD IT'S TOO *LITTLE*, TOO *LATE*.

IF YOU ZOMBIES'D *HEATED UP* MORE OFTEN, YOU MIGHT'VE *EVOLVED* FAST ENOUGH TO *KEEP UP*.

YOU COULDA BEEN LIKE *US*.

AS IT IS, YOU'RE STILL TOO FAR *BEHIND*. TOO *INFERIOR*. TOO *HUMAN*.

NO... HGBUHK PLEASE...

HEY, WE DIDN'T *INVENT* NATURAL SELECTION --

-- WE JUST *ENFORCE* IT.

FREEZE, PUSBAG!

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!
The LAW of the JUNGLE
LEN KAMINSKI WORDS
ASHLEY WOOD PICTURES
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT LETTERING
CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS
JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE CHIEF

YOU GOT TO BE KIDDING.

CHOOM CHOOM CHOOM

ONE OF HIM AGAINST ALL OF US?

BITHEAD MUST BE FLAT-OUT SKELTERED.

THRAKAKAKAKOOM

HOWZIT THAT SPEECH GOES?

YOU GOT THE RIGHT TO CUT THAT SCRAP OUT.

YOU GOT THE RIGHT TO GET YOUR SHOCKIN' HEADS CAVED IN...

CKBLAM

FSSSSHH

SKABZADAW

SON

OF A

CLIT--

A BEDROOM SUITE...

MGBLPH

HIYA, HONEY.

I'VE BEEN *WAITING* FOR YOU TO WAKE UP.

GHURHK

I'M SO SORRY I HAD TO *HIT* YOU LIKE THAT, BUT YOU'RE JUST SO CUTE WHEN YOU'RE *UNCONSCIOUS*.

NOW, *TELL* ME, *DAHLING* --

-- DO YOU WANT TO *DIE HAPPY* --

-- OR DO WE *HAVE* TO DO THIS THE *HARD* WAY?

HGHHK

ANYTHING YOU *SAY*, LADY...

...JUST DON'T *HURT* ME...

MINUTES LATER...

MISTER VALENTI?! WE LOGGED A SECURITY BREACH IN --

Oh, GLITCH.

WHAT --

OHLORD

DID YOU...DID YOU SEE HIS CHEST?

YEAH... AND I THINK I'M GONNA SPEW...

SOMEBODY... PUNCHED HIS HEART OUT...

CYBERSPACE.

♫...A KISS IS STILL A KISS, A SIGH IS STILL A SIGH... ♪

-- YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT A FULL-FLEDGED UNDERGROUND **RESISTANCE MOVEMENT**, ANESTHESIA.

THAT'S **NEVER** BEEN WHAT THE **UNDERNET** IS ABOUT, AND YOU **KNOW** IT!

MAYBE 'CAUSE WE NEVER HAD ANYTHING **BAD** ENOUGH TO **RESIST** BEFORE, CRACKERJACK.

YOU DON'T NEED **ME** TO VID IT FOR YOU -- THINGS IN THIS TOWN ARE GONNA GET A **LOT** WORSE BEFORE THEY GET **BETTER.**

TIME TO **BOTTOM-LINE** IT. WHO'S IN AND WHO'S **OUT?**

SIRIUS?

KABAL.

IN. OF COURSE.

IN. CAUTIOUSLY.

LADY ADA?

I DECLINE.

POIT

MISTER SLITHER?

IN.

LEAVES YOU, CRACKERJACK.

I'M NOT POLITICAL. OUT.

POIT

ALL RIGHT. TIME TO START **PRIORITIZING.**

FIRST, WE GOT TO TAP THE CASH FLOW, **FINANCE** THIS THING. THAT'S **YOU**, SLITHER.

SECOND: CRACK THE **SHIELD** NET, RECON **THAT** SITCH. SIRIUS, **YOU** TAKE THAT.

THIRD, WE'RE GONNA NEED **SPECIAL TALENTS** FOR **REALTIME SCENARIOS.**

HEY, DON'T FORGET OUR NEW "FEDERAL MARSHAL." I SEE HOW HE COULD BECOME AN ECONOMY-SIZED **PROBLEM.**

LEAVE THAT TO **ME.** I'LL HAVE DOSSIERS ON DEPENDABLE AGENTS BY 22:00.

BELIEVE ME, I **HAVEN'T.**

NOT FOR A **HOT SECOND.**

HIM I'LL BE DEALING WITH **PERSONALLY.**

VRRT

DISCONNECTING FROM HOST SYSTEM.

CAPTURE SESSION TO PERMANENT MEMORY; ENCRYPT AND SAVE.

BEEP BOOP BIP BEEP VBIP

ANESTHESIA..? WHAT'S --

KYLIE, YOU AND ME, WE GOT TO *TALK...*

THRRROOMMM

SHOCKIN' *ANARQUISTA-DORES.*

TOOK *FOREVER* TO DIG OUTTA THAT RUBBLE. LONG ENOUGH FOR THEM TO GET *SCARCE.*

THEY THINK THEY GET OFF *THAT* EASY, THEY'RE *JAMMED.*

THANKS TO *DOOM*, I GOT WAYS OF TRACKING 'EM DOWN.

!!

HEY, HAVEN'T EVEN USED MY *SIREN* YET.

VWOOO VWOOO VWOO

ONE THING I'LL SAY ABOUT BEING *THE LAW* --

-- IT DOESN'T *SUCK.*

THAT'S IT, BITHEADS, GET *OUTTA* MY *WAY.*

SHIELD

LOOK SHARP.

TROUBLE'S COMING.

I DON'T CARE IF HE *IS* THE PRESIDENT, HE'S GOTTA BE *NUTS*.

GIVING A BADGE TO THAT *PERP*...

WHERE'S *MCBAIN*?

HIS OFFICE.

YOU GOT AN *APPOINT-MENT*?

BYTE ME, JACK.

SO THEY HATE MY *GUTS*. WHO *GIVES A RIP*?

THEY CAN'T *TOUCH* ME.

YOU NEED TO SEE ME... "MARSHAL" ?

THERE'S A *WAR* GOING DOWN OUT THERE AND *SHIELD* ISN'T DOING *THING ONE* ABOUT IT!

I ASSUME YOU'RE REFERRING TO THE RECENT *UPSWING* IN GANG ACTIVITY.

SHOCKIN' *RIGHT* I AM!

THE ANARQUISTADORES JUST GREASED THE TOXIC ZOMBIES -- THAT MAKES *FIVE* OTHER GANGS THEY'VE MADE EXTINCT. *THIS WEEK.*

IT'S *SHIELD POLICY* TO HANDLE INTERGANG VIOLENCE WITH A *"CONTROLLED BURN"* APPROACH.

ONCE THEY'VE *THINNED OUT* THEIR OWN NUMBERS, *WE* CAN MOP UP WHAT'S *LEFT.*

YOU GOT *NO CLUE,* MAN -- THOSE *GANGS* HOLD THIS TOWN *TOGETHER.*

YOU LET THE *ANARQUISTADORES* TAKE OVER AND THE WHOLE *CITY'S* GOING TO GO *SIDEWAYS* ON YOU.

GET THIS *CLEAR,* MISTER -- *I* DON'T TAKE ORDERS FROM *YOU.*

IF IT WAS UP TO *ME,* YOU'D BE NOTHING BUT A *BAD MEMORY* ALREADY.

I DON'T CARE *WHAT* YOU DO, JUST DON'T GET IN *MY* WAY --

-- AND GET *OUT* OF MY *OFFICE.*

RATBITING CANCERSCUM PUSBAG...

SHOULD'VE *FIGURED SHIELD'D* BE JUST LIKE *CSS*, LOOKING OUT FOR THE *UPRAMPERS* AND *SCREW* THE *STREET*.

THAT'S THE DEAL, *FINE*. THE STREET'S GOT *ME* --

-- AND WHETHER SHIELD *LIKES* IT OR NOT, *I* GOT *ACCESS* TO THEIR MAINFRAME.

OOOOH, *BABY*.

THIS IS ONE *HOT* SET-UP.

TIME TO CRUNCH SOME SERIOUS *NUMBERS*.

SNIK

SKLIK

DOESN'T *GET* ANY FASTER AND DENSER THAN *THIS*.

USETA TAKE ME *HOURS* OF HACKING TO GET THIS KIND OF *'NET ACCESS*.

NOW, WHERE DO I *START*?

HANG ON...

CASUALTY REPORTS? SECURICAM LOGS?

...THAT'S MY OLD *GRAFFITI TAG*.

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY LEFT ME AN *ENCRYPTED MESSAGE*.

SNIK

POINK

SKLIK

YOU PUSBAG!

YOU SOLD OUT!

AND YOU'RE GONNA PAY!

GNHH-

SQUARK

SON OF A GLITCH...

...WHATEVER THE SHOCK *THAT* WAS...*KICKED* ME RIGHT OUTTA THE *MATRIX*...

...TRYING TO RELOG... KEEP GETTING "*ACCESS DENIED*".

JAMMIT, I'M *LOCKED* OUT OF THE *NET*!

MAINLINE MEDIA.
...RESULT OF THE PRESIDENT'S ELIMINATION OF THE BLACK CARD SYSTEM, THESE "YACHT PEOPLE" HAVE BECOME INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL PARIAHS...
...CONTINUE TO DENY REPORTS OF EBOLA ZAIRE IN MIAMI, WHILE CONFIRMING THE EXISTENCE OF A NEW STRAIN OF LESSA-SIX.
DOOM
NEXT UP ON THE PLAGUE CHANNEL: YOUR LOCAL OUTBREAK!
ANDY'S HOUSE OF
Chaos
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE PEOPLE ASKED YOU, "WHAT'D'YOU, HAVE A HOLE IN YOUR HEAD?"
WELL, NOW YOU CAN HAVE THAT HOLE IN YOUR HEAD, AT ANDY'S HOUSE OF TREPANNING!
TAKATAPITATAKATAP
GHOST RIDER
SPIN SEGMENT
Willis Adams
1. OPEN ON:
I...
...I
CAN'T
DO
THIS.
BIP
FILE DELETED
TAKTAPTAK
CHIKTAPTIK
TAKCHAKTIP

COULD TAKE *DAYS* TO OVERRIDE THAT 'NET LOCKOUT, GLITCH I AIN'T GOT THE *RAM* FOR RIGHT NOW.

TIME TO SCORE SOME DATA *F2F*.

LOOK, I TOLD YOU, I DON'T HAVE *TIME* FOR THIS.

I'VE ALREADY *PAID* MY DEBT TO COCHRANE, I OWE YOU *NADA*.

AT *MEDI-KWIK*.

DON'T *SCREW* WITH ME, *SANDOZ*.

I KNOW ALL ABOUT WHAT YOU DO *OFF* THE *BOOKS* AROUND HERE.

UNLESS YOU WANT ME TO *BUST* YOU INTO NEXT WEEK, YOU'LL *FIND* THE TIME.

EVERYTHING YOU CAN TELL ME ABOUT THE *ANARQUISTADORES* AND *WHITE HEAT*.

SIIIGHH

WHAT DO YOU *WANT*?

BAD CRAZINESS, THAT.

GIVES USERS A POWERFUL FEELING OF *SUPERIORITY* --

-- WHICH, IF THEY USE *HEAVILY* ENOUGH, ENDS UP BEING *JUSTIFIED.*

IN *MEGADOSES*, IT KICKS METABOLISM INTO *OVERDRIVE*, BOOSTS *IQS*, THE WHOLE SUPERHUMAN *NINE YARDS.*

IT'S LIKE A MORE POTENT VERSION OF THE CAPTAIN AMERICA *SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM* FROM THE TWENCEN --

-- EXCEPT TURNED INTO AN *ADDICTIVE STREET DRUG.*

THE *WHAT* FROM *WHEN?*

SKIP THE *ANCIENT HISTORY*, MAN, I GOT THE *ANARQUISTADORES* TO DEAL WITH IN THE *NOW.*

NO MYSTERY *THERE* -- THEY'VE BEEN INTO THE STUFF SINCE *DAY ONE.*

THEY'RE JUST THE FARTHEST ALONG ON THE *MUTATION CURVE*, IS ALL.

I'M TELLING YOU, THIS STUFF'S A REAL *CUSTOM JOB...*

"*CUSTOM JOB*"... WHERE'VE I HEARD THAT BEF--

SHOCK *ME.*

SHOULDA *FIGURED* ONLY *ONE* GUY COULD DO IT.

MAX SYNERGY.

ST. VITUS' DANCETERIA.

THUMPABUDUMPATHABUMPADUMP

I SEE HER.

MOVING IN FOR --

HUKK

WE'VE GOT A **PROBLEM** ON PERIMETER.

THUD

THUP

WELLLL...

LORD... THEIR *HEARTS*...

...YOU KNOW HOW IT *IS*...

...SOME-TIMES--

SWISHT

SWISHT

-NNGBLH-

-ULHK-

-- A GIRL JUST CAN'T *HELP* IT.

BEEN A *LONG* TIME, *BUNKOWSKI*.

I HAVEN'T GONE BY *THAT* NAME IN *YEARS*.

I'M *MAX SYNERGY* NOW.

AND I'M QUITE CERTAIN I *DON'T* KNOW *YOU*...

NONE OF US ARE WHAT WE USED TO BE.

THESE DAYS, THEY CALL ME HEARTBREAKER.

YEAH?

YOU SO MUCH AS TWITCH --

-- AND THEY CAN PUT IT ON YOUR TOMBSTONE.

NEXT:

DISTURBING THE PEACE

MARVEL COMICS
2099
GHOST RIDER
2099 A.D.
A.WOOD
JIM DALY
1995

INSIDE MAX SYNERGY'S NIGHTCLUB, ST. VITUS DANCETERIA...

THERE'S A NEW KID IN TRANSVERSE CITY.

CALL HER *HEARTBREAKER* --

BACK OFF, PUSBAG!

-- AND KEEP YOUR *HANDS* TO *YOURSELF*.

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

DANGEROUS CURVES

LEN KAMINSKI words
ASHLEY WOOD pictures
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT lettering
CHRISTIE SCHEELE colors
JOEY CAVALIERI editor
BOBBIE CHASE chief
VIOLENT HUES Malibu computer coloring

NICE ANATOMY YOU GOT THERE.

BE A SHAME TO HAVE TO PUT DAYLIGHT THROUGH IT.

YOUR GUN ISN'T BIG ENOUGH TO MESS WITH ME, GHOST RIDER.

YOU WANNA RIP?

C'MON!

CHHK EEZ

SHIK

LIKE THE BLADES.

FRACTAL EDGES, RIGHT?

BET THEY WORK GREAT ON MEAT.

SPANGK

ZIK

SPAK

ZREEK

WANT A DEMO? GET OUT OF MY WAY.

SYNERGY OWES ME A LIFE. I'M TAKING HIS!

AIN'T HAPPENIN'.

I GOT BIZ WITH THE MAN. I NEED HIM BREATHING.

JAM YOUR BIZ!

YOU DON'T HAVE CLUE ONE WHAT'S GOING DOWN HERE --

-- HOW LONG I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR HIM --

-- WHAT HE DID TO ME!

'S RIGHT.

AND I

DON'T

CARE.

SKA BLAM

SKA BLAM

I'M THE LAW.

I CALL THE SHOTS.

YOU DON'T TOUCH THE MAN.

HNNNG SQUARK

THAKANG

SON OF A GLITCH...

YOU GOT THA --

MAKES *TWO* OF US, COW-BOY.

YOU'RE *TOUGHER* THAN I *FIGURED.*

NO ONE EVER GOT BACK UP FROM THAT *HEART-PUNCH* BEFORE...

SNAK KLITCH

KTHRVRRRR

GUESS I DON'T HAVE TO GO *EASY* ON YOU ANY-MORE.

HGGK

BARCODE

I'M GONNA CUT TO THE *CHASE.*

THERE'S SOME BAD, *BAD* STUFF GOIN' DOWN IN THIS TOWN, AND YOU'RE *HIP-DEEP* IN IT, KYLIE.

I GOT NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE *TALKING* ABOUT, ANESTHESIA.

DON'T GIVE ME THAT *SCRAP, CHICA.*

YOU'RE NOT *HALF* AS BIMBOID AS YOU GET YOUR BOYTOYS TO *THINK.*

...HE WAS *DEAD*... THEN I THOUGHT MAYBE HE *WASN'T*...

...NOW HE *IS* AGAIN... I THINK...

Uhm, TALK? ABOUT *WHAT?*

-- AND WHAT WE'RE GONNA *DO* ABOUT HIM.

IT'S REALLY TRUE, THEN.

FOUND *THAT* WHILE I WAS TRYIN' TO GET *SEEG* BACK TOGETHER AFTER THE MESS *SHIELD* LEFT HIM IN AND KNEW WE HAD TO *TALK.*

'BOUT HOW MUCH OF *ZERO COCHRANE* IS STILL LEFT INSIDE THAT THING THEY CALL *THE GHOST RIDER* --

BIP

YEP.

HE *INFO-DUMPED* ME ALL ABOUT IT.

SHOCKIN' CREEP!

HE DIDN'T TELL *ME*... I HAD TO FIGURE IT *MYSELF*.

AND EVEN *THEN*, I WASN'T *SURE*.

PROBABLY 'CUZ HE DIN'T *NEED* ANYTHING FROM YOU.

THAT BOY NEVER *DID* THINK ABOUT ANY-BODY BUT *HIMSELF*.

USED TO BE, YEAH.

BUT... THE LAST TIME I *SAW* HIM, I GOT THE FEELING HE'D *CHANGED* SOMEHOW.

NOT FOR THE *BETTER*, YOU ASK *ME*.

"FEDERAL MARSHAL", MY *BUTT*.

YEAH, I DON'T UNDER-STAND *THAT* EITHER.

I'D NEVER HAVE FIGURED *HIM* FOR THROWING IN WITH THE *SECURI-COPS*.

YOU GOT *THAT* RIGHT.

SOMETHING ABOUT IT *STINKS.*

BUT THE BOTTOM LINE IS, IF HE'S ON THE *WRONG* SIDE OF THE LINE WHEN THINGS GO *DOWN*, THE WHY *AIN'T* GONNA MATTER.

FAR AS I KNOW, *YOU* AND *I* ARE THE *ONLY* ONES WHO KNOW THE *GHOST RIDER* USED TO BE *ZERO COCHRANE* --

"*THINGS GOING DOWN*"...

WHY'RE YOU LETTING *ME* IN ON THIS?

...YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE *UNDERNET*, AREN'T YOU?

-- AND FOR THE *TIME BEING*, I WANT TO *KEEP* IT THAT WAY.

JAGGED!

I CAN'T *BELIEVE* WE ACTUALLY MANAGED TO HACK ANESTHESIA'S *ICE.* *

FRONT LINE

* INTRUSION COUNTER-MEASURE ELECTRONICS. -- JOEY.

WHAT'D I *TELL* YOU?

THE UNDERNET'S GETTING READY TO *MOVE*, AND WE GOT THE *INSIDE BUZZ!*

WE GOT *JACK*.

WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, *NADA*.

ARE YOU *KIDDING?!* WE JUST FOUND OUT THE GHOST RIDER'S *REAL HANDLE!*

TELL ME THAT AIN'T *SERIOUSLY* HOT DATA!

'SPLAINS A LOT.

KNEW THERE HADTA BE *SOMETHING* BETWEEN THEM, WHY HE WENT TO ALL THAT TROUBLE FOR KYLIE *--

-- AN' WHY SHE'S BEEN *WEIRD* ABOUT HIM EVER SINCE.

* GR '99 #6-8. -- JOEY

LISTEN DR. NEON"... WHOEVER KNOWS *THAT* HAS WHAT IT TAKES --

-- TO BRING HIM *DOWN*...

AN' WITH *HIM* HISTORICAL... MAYBE I'LL HAVE A *CHANCE* WITH KYLIE...

DEPED No 3499

A WOOD '95

SCHKTHRVRR

PLSBAG!

FOR

THIS...

YOU'LL

PAY

AAUGHK

LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO ME!

'S NOT MEAT. METAL?! LIKE ME?

DIDN'T KNOW THERE WERE ANY OTHERS...

IT'S RUINED!

AND IT'S YOUR FAULT!

YOUR... YOUR FACE...

YOU CAN HAVE SYNERGY TODAY.

BUT I'LL BE BACK FOR HIS HEART --

-- AND YOURS!

WAIT --

-- PLEASE --

-- I WANNA KNOW --

AW SCRAP...

JAMMIT, SHE'S FAST.

CAN'T *THINK* ABOUT IT NOW. HAFTA FOCUS ON THE *JOB* I CAME TO *DO*.

WE NEED *WORDS*, SYNERGY!

I *ASSUME* YOU'RE HERE IN YOUR NEW CAPACITY AS *LAW OFFICER* --

-- PROBABLY IN RELATION TO MY DISTRIBUTION OF THE SYNTHETIC NEURO-TRANSMITTER CALLED *WHITE HEAT*.

YOU GOT *THAT* RIGHT.

I'M PUTTING YOU ON *NOTICE* THAT *THAT BIZ* IS *OVER*.

I'M AFRAID I CAN'T ACCOMMODATE YOU ON THAT.

THE *SOCIAL EXPERIMENT* I DESIGNED IT FOR IS *FAR* FROM *COMPLETE*.

EXPERIMENT?!

SINCE THE TWENCEN, THERE'S BEEN *DOZENS* OF METHODS OF HUMAN PHYSIOLOGICAL *ENHANCEMENT* DISCOVERED.

NEARLY *ALL* OF THEM, HOWEVER, WERE EITHER *IRREPRODUCIBLE ACCIDENTS* OR NOT *COST-EFFECTIVE* FOR *LARGE GROUPS*.

WHITE HEAT IS THE FIRST TRULY *PROLETARIAN* MEANS OF CREATING *SUPER-HUMANS*.

YEAH, AND *LOOKIT* 'EM!

WHAT WOULD YOU EXPECT, FOR THEM *ALL* TO PUT ON *CAPES* AND *FIGHT CRIME?*

OUR CULTURE HAS BEEN *STAGNATING* FOR DECADES, ROUGHLY SINCE THE *ERADICATION* OF *RACISM.*

MY *THEORY* IS THAT THE TWO ARE *CONNECTED,* THAT HUMANS *NEED* A SOURCE OF NEO-TRIBAL TENSION TO PRODUCE THE *COMPETITIVENESS* TO --

SCREW YOUR THEORY!

IT'S A SHOCKIN' *WARZONE* OUT THERE!

IT *BITES RATS,* AND I DON'T *GIVE A RIP* --

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN YOU *OWE* ME A *FAVOR?* *

I'M CALLING IT IN *NOW...* WALK AWAY AND *FORGET* THIS ENTIRE SUBJECT.

I JUST SAVED YOUR *LIFE.*

FIGURE THAT MAKES US *EVEN.*

* GR '99 #7. -- JOEY

YOU WEREN'T *ASKED* TO INTERFERE. MY *SECURITY MEASURES* ARE *QUITE* ADEQUATE.

THE DEBT *REMAINS* UNPAID.

YEAH? WE'LL SEE JUST HOW *SECURE* YOU ARE...

DEFENSE CONDITION: DROP ACOUSTICAL DAMPING FIELDS; ACTIVATE *BEHAVIORAL-MODIFICATION HARMONIC* DELTA-SIX.

BLACK NOISE.

SOUND SYSTEM SCREAMS LIKE *FEEDBACK* AND *BROKEN GLASS* --

-- PUSHING SOME KINDA MONKEY-BRAIN *INSTINCT BUTTON* --

-- AND THE CLUB'S CROWD GOES *WILD*...

ELSEWHERE...

I *HATE* THIS SPOOK-SHOW SCRAP, KABAL.

CAN'T YOU *EVER* DO BIZ SOME-PLACE PEOPLE CAN SIT AND HAVE A *SHOCKIN'* DRINK?

PARANOIA ALWAYS *WAS* KABAL'S FAVORITE HOBBY.

WHAT DO YOU *EXPECT* FROM A GUY WHO THINKS *THORISM* IS AN *ALCHEMAX PLOT* --

-- AND THAT *SAMSA, NYPD* IS SECRETLY PRODUCED BY BY *BUG-EYED ET'S* AS P.R.?

IN ANY EVENT, HOWEVER MUCH YOU MIGHT MOCK MY *PRAGMATISM* --

-- NEITHER YOU NOR NEURODANCER WOULD BE *HERE* WERE IT NOT FOR MY REPUTATION FOR *DISCRETION.*

BOTH ARE *WELL-DOCUMENTED* CONSPIRACIES, *ICE 9.*

IGNORE THE *EVIDENCE* AT YOUR OWN PERIL.

ZZSHIP

WARP ANGEL.

VERY GOOD. WE AWAIT ONLY ONE MORE.

WAITIN'S OVER, THEN.

THE PARTIES I REPRESENT REQUIRE A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY GROUP OF AGENTS FOR CERTAIN COVERT OPERATIONS.

OPERATIONS WHICH MUST BE HANDLED CAREFULLY, DELICATELY, AND ABOVE ALL --

ALL RIGHT, KABAL. YOU CALLED, WE CAME.

ARE YOU GOING TO TALK BIZ, OR WHAT?

CODA. EXCELLENT.

" -- QUIETLY."

DON'T JAM WITH ME, BITHEADS!

KTHRVRRRR

I'LL CUT MY WAY THROUGH, IF I HAFTA --

-- YOU VID?!

I'LL --

THE ENDLESS KNIGHT

THEY... DIDN'T *MEAN*...

JUST CHARGED INTO THE *'SAW*...

ZOMBIES... ALL THEY ARE, NOW. THANKS TO --

SYNERGY!

I'M *COMING* FOR YOU!

AND *NOTHING'S* --

-- GONNA --

-- *STOP* --

-- ME!

MAKE 'EM *BACK* OFF --

-- OR I'M THROWIN' *YOU* TO THEM.

IN *PIECES.*

DEACTIVATE DEFENSIVE HARMONICS.

BROADCAST *PACIFICATION SUBLIMINAL* ALPHA-2.

I'M TAKIN' YOU *IN.*

THIS WHOLE OPERATION OF YOURS IS *HISTORY.*

YOU *REALIZE* WHAT YOU'RE DOING, DON'T YOU?

WE HAD A *DEAL*, AND YOU *RENEGED.*

YOUR WORD ON THE STREET IS GOING TO BE WORTHLESS FROM NOW ON.

WRECK *YOU*, JACK.

WE'RE GOIN' *DOWNTOWN.*

SHIELD HQ...

BOOK 'IM.

NARCO-TRAFFICKING... RACKETEERING... DISTURBING THE PEACE...

... AND BEING AN ALL-AROUND PIECE OF *HUMAN SEWAGE.*

I'M NOT GOING TO *FORGET* THIS.

OUR BUSINESS IS FAR FROM OVER, YOU AND I...

YEAH?

FIGURE I'LL START *WORRYING* IN FIFTEEN TO TWENTY...

WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE, "*MARSHAL*". NO NEED TO *HANG ABOUT.*

NONE... AT... ALL.

MESSAGE *RECEIVED*, JERKWEED.

AND WHEN YOU GET A SEC, YOU CAN *BYTE ME.*

KNEW THE DEAL WHEN I CAME TO SHIELD. NOTHING I DO'S EVER GONNA MAKE A DIFF WITH THEM.

FAR AS THEY'RE CONCERNED, I'M NEVER GONNA BE MORE THAN UPPITY DOWNRAMP SCUM.

BUT... NOT HERE... IN LITTLE CALCUTTA...

I REMEMBER BEING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THOSE EXPRESSIONS...

MOMMY... DON' LET THE BAD MAN GEMME...

I KNOW WHAT THEY SEE WHEN THEY LOOK AT ME...

...JUST ANOTHER STINKING BLACKBOOT.

PFTSPLT

JAMMIT.

HOW'D THE WORD ABOUT SYNERGY GET OUT SO FAST..?

CYBERSPACE.

VIDEO FEED:
PUBLIC SECURICAM #1723

WORD TRAVELS FAST IN THIS TOWN, DON'T IT *"MARSHAL"*?

'SPECIALLY WHEN IT'S GOT SOMEONE TO HELP SPREAD IT AROUND.

YOU GETTIN' A TASTE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE THE MAN, RATBITE?

HE HEHEHE HEE

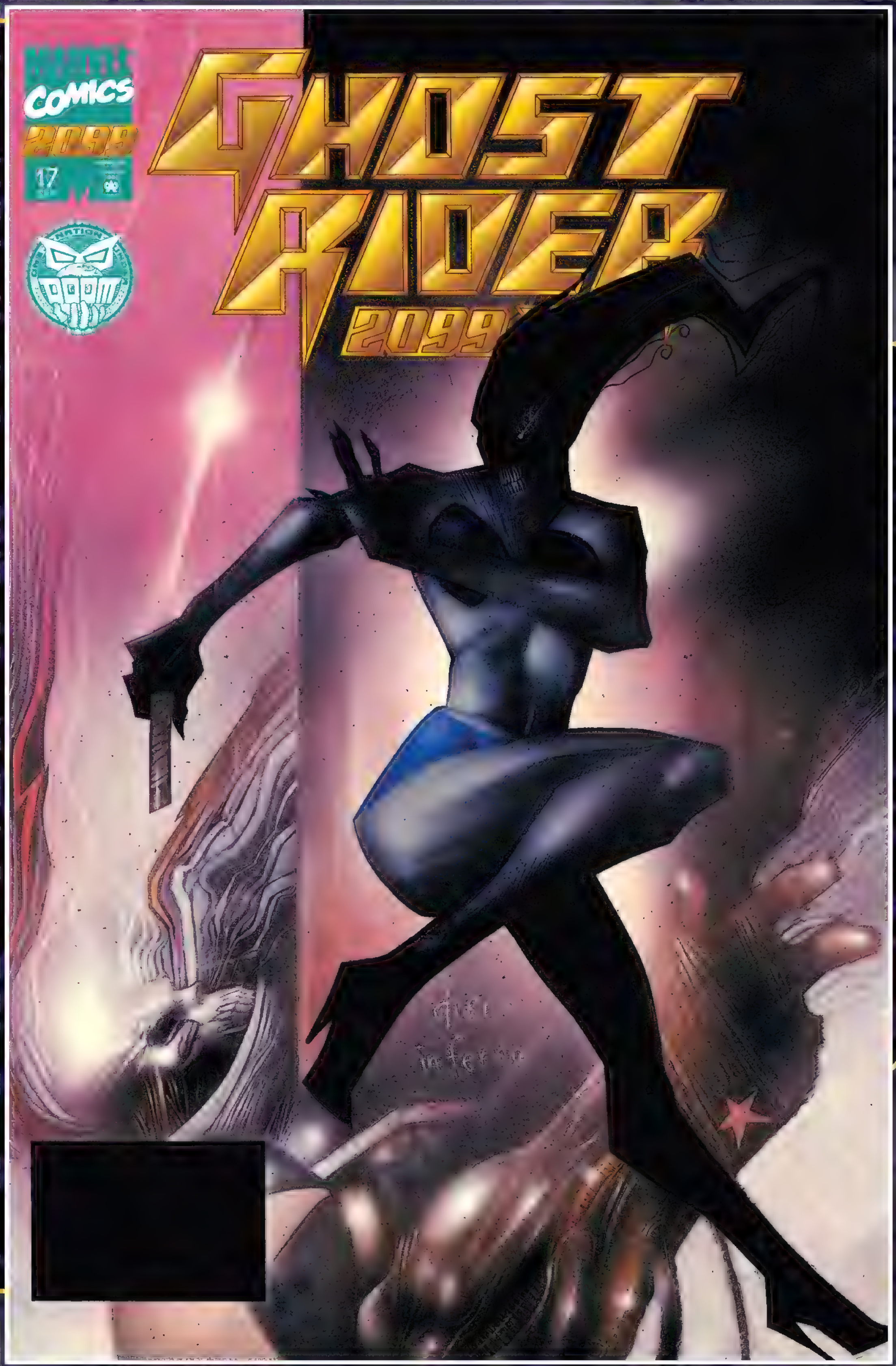
HOPE YOU LIKE IT.

'CUZ IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING...

GLARE --

next:

HOMECOMING


COMICS
17
GHOST RIDER
2099

BAM BAM BAM

MRPHL... HKK HKK

FPBLH... HRM...

WHAT IN... FOUR IN THE MORNING..?

SECURICAM DOWN?

GOOD LORD... YOU!

POLICE. OPEN UP!

POLICE?

HRK- HRRM WHO IS IT?

PRODIGAL SON

HI DAD.

LONG TIME NO SEE.

LEN KAMINSKI
WORDS

ASHLEY WOOD
PENCILS

JIM DALY
INKS

RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT
LETTERING

CHRISTIE SCHEELE
COLORS

JOEY CAVALIERI
EDITOR

BOBBIE CHASE
CHIEF

COMPUTER COLOR BY
WOLFPACK & FOODHAMMER!

KENSHIRO? WHY ARE YOU --

HUH. PLACE HASN'T *CHANGED* ANY.

JUST LOOKS... *SMALLER.*

WELL... YOU *HAVE...*

...GROWN...

...QUITE A BIT.

HOW'S *MOM?*

Oh, FINE, *FINE.*

NEVER *BETTER.*

YOU ALWAYS WERE FULL OF *GLITCH*, DAD.

SHE HASN'T BEEN *'FINE'* SINCE I WAS *FIVE*.

I BET SHE'S STILL WIRED INTO THAT STINKING *3V* SET IN THERE --

-- WASTED ON *SERENEVIL* --

-- HER HEAD FULL OF SHOCKIN' *BROADCAST* SPEW.

DON'T YOU *DARE* USE THAT KIND OF LANGUAGE IN *MY HOUSE!*

"IN MY HOUSE."

"BECAUSE I SAID SO."

"FOR YOUR OWN GOOD."

JAM YOUR HOUSE --

-- AND *JAM* YOU!

I DON'T KNOW WHY I *CAME* HERE TO *BEGIN* WITH!

LEAVING SO *SOON*?

WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO *REALIZE* --

"-- YOU CAN'T KEEP *RUNNING AWAY* FOREVER."

LITTLE CALCUTTA.

ONLY A MATTER OF *TIME* BEFORE MAINLINE MEDIA GOES *ORBITAL* OVER MY WALKING OUT ON THEM --

-- AND REPORTS ME TO *SHIELD* FOR *BREACH OF CONTRACT.* AND AFTER *THAT,* WELL...

...HOW HARD IS IT GOING TO *BE* FOR THEM TO *FIND* ONE OF THIS CITY'S MOST FAMILIAR NEWSVIDDERS?

NEVER THOUGHT I'D EVER *WISH* FOR A BASEMENT-LEVEL **Q** *RATING* --

-- LET ALONE BE COMING TO A DIVE LIKE *THIS* WITHOUT *AIR SUPPORT.*

733

ARCODE

ANESTHESIA JONES?

SOMETHING I CAN *GET* FOR YOU --

-- MISTER ADAMS?

YES. AN *UNDERNET* CONNECTION.

I WANT TO MAKE A *DEAL...*

RUN AWAY?

RUN AWAY?!

I DIDN'T "RUN AWAY", OLD MAN --

-- YOU THREW ME OUT!

I DID WHAT I HAD TO DO.

YOU TOOK TO RUNNING WITH GUTTER TRASH -- I HAD TO PROTECT YOUR MOTHER FROM --

PROTECT HER?!

YOU CALL THAT PROTECTING HER?!

STOP IT! HOW CAN YOU BE SO DISRESPECTFUL OF YOUR OWN --

DIS-RESPECT-FUL?!

LIKE YOU EVER SHOWED HER ANY RESPECT... YOU TREATED HER LIKE ANOTHER PIECE OF THE FURNITURE...

...NO WONDER SHE DECIDED TO GO AHEAD AND TURN INTO ONE...

LETTING HER ROT, LIKE A VEGETABLE?!

CYBERSPACE.

MAN, WHO KNEW THE DEEP-STORAGE LEVELS WENT DOWN SO FAR?

MUST BE GODZILLIONS OF BYTES OF STUFF TUCKED AWAY DOWN HERE.

ANYTHING THEY GOT LOCKED UP THIS TIGHT'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING THEY'RE AFRAID OF.

MAYBE EVEN SOMETHING THAT CAN DO THEM SERIOUS DAMAGE.

MOST OF IT'S JUNK -- BUT THAT'S DOWNRIGHT JAGGED.

AND ANYTHING LIKE THAT, I WANT.

ZKLIK SCHK

SOME KINDA HYPERSECURE ARCHIVE... WITH ENCRYPTION CODES THAT'VE GOT "GHOSTWORKS" WRITTEN ALL OVER 'EM.

AND AFTER HACKING MY WAY OUTTA THE ICE* AROUND THEIR DOMAIN --

-- CRACKING THIS WON'T EVEN BE INTERESTING.

ZLAK TIK

* INTRUSION COUNTERMEASURE ELECTRONICS -- Joey

AH-HA! GOT YOU, YOU RATBITE!

NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT YOU ARE...

SKLIX

DEARCHIVING PROGRAM: 'L-CYPHER'

INITIALIZING SELF-AWARENESS SUBROUTINE

FREE!

AFTER AN ETERNITY OF NANOTIME...

I LIVE AGAIN!

...

YOU NEVER *DID* KNOW WHEN TO LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE.

MOM? ARE YOU STILL *IN* THERE?

AND NOW, BACK TO SAMSA, NYPD!

THE MURDERER CAN ONLY BE THE INSIDIOUS CRIMINAL MASTERMIND, SARDONICUS EBON!

BUT HE'S BEEN DEAD -- FOR THE PAST FOURTEEN YEARS!

...DEAD FOR THE PAST FOURTEEN YEARS...

I CHECKED HIS SARCOPHAGUS, AND FOUND NOTHING BUT AN EMPTY SHELL!

...NOTHING BUT AN EMPTY SHELL...

MAKES ME WANNA *SPEW.*

WHY DID YOU COME HERE?

I...I DIDN'T HAVE ANYWHERE ELSE TO GO.

I THINK... I'VE SCREWED UP... *BAD.*

I BROKE A PROMISE, AN *IMPORTANT* ONE.

BECAUSE OF THAT, MY *WORD* ON THE *STREET* ISN'T WORTH *JACK.*

NOBODY I USED TO KNOW'S EVER GONNA *TRUST* ME AGAIN.

I SHOULD HOPE *NOT.*

IT WOULDN'T *DO* FOR AN OFFICER OF THE LAW TO ASSOCIATE WITH THE *GUTTER CRIMINALS* YOU USED TO RUN WITH.

YOU DON'T *GET* IT, *DO* YOU?

THE GHOSTWORKS.

YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND.

This is potentially catastrophic.

The subject's personality index displays significant deviation from our original template.

Impossible to say with certainty...

... as his behavioral mutation has not reached its final iteration.

Processing interrupt; incoming data.

Higher-order concerns supersede this discussion.

The seal has been breached; L-CYPHER has been unleashed upon the Net.

WHAT I DON'T *UNDERSTAND* IS WHY YOU'D STILL CARE ABOUT THE OPINION OF *COMMON THUGS* --

-- NOW THAT YOU'VE FINALLY CRAWLED UP OUT OF THE *GUTTER* AND *MADE* SOMETHING OF YOURSELF.

LOOK AT YOU! A *FEDERAL MARSHAL!*

DON'T YOU *SEE* WHAT AN *HONOR* THAT IS?

HONOR?! YOU DON'T HAVE *CLUE ONE* WHAT HONOR IS!

I'VE TURNED INTO *EVERYTHING* I'VE ALWAYS *HATED* --

-- A STINKING *BLACKBOOT*. ANOTHER PUSBAG WITH A *BADGE*.

HOW CAN YOU *SAY* THAT?

YOU'VE ACHIEVED A POSITION OF *AUTHORITY* AND *PRESTIGE* MOST PEOPLE CAN ONLY *DREAM* OF.

YOU'RE PART OF AN *ELITE* FORCE OF OFFICERS ENTRUSTED WITH UPHOLDING *THE LAW*.

THAT'S WHAT THEY *TELL* YOU, BUT IT'S A *LIE*.

BUT *YOU*. YOU DON'T EVEN WANT TO *KNOW* THE TRUTH.

KABAL'S HOLOCHAMBER.

THE *TRUTH* IS THAT A SIZABLE PORTION OF THE "*LOST TECH*" OF THE TWENCEN WAS NEVER *LOST* --

-- IT WAS ***SUPPRESSED*** BY THE TRANSNATIONALS BECAUSE THEY DECIDED IT WAS TOO ***DESTABILIZING*** AN INFLUENCE ON SOCIETY.

HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO WAY FOR THEM TO BE SURE THOSE TECHNOLOGIES WOULDN'T BE USEFUL, ***PROFITABLE*** SOMEDAY.

SO THEY LOCKED THEM AWAY IN ***UNDERGROUND ARCHIVES*** TO ENSURE THEIR SECURITY.

RECENTLY, ***THE UNDERNET*** HAS ***LOCATED*** ONE OF THOSE ARCHIVES.

YOUR MISSION IS TO ***RETRIEVE*** CERTAIN ARTIFACTS FROM IT.

TALL ORDER, ***KABAL***.

CODA'S ***RIGHT***. WON'T BE ***EASY***.

IF THIS WERE A *SIMPLE* OPERATION, *ICE 9*, I'D HAVE HIRED MORE *COST-EFFECTIVE* FIELD OPERATIVES.

DO ANY OF YOU CARE TO PLEAD *INCOMPETENCE*... AND *FORFEIT* YOUR FEES?

I *THOUGHT* NOT.

NOW, THEN. *NEURODANCER* WILL SEARCH THE *ARCHIVE DATABASE* TO PINPOINT THE ARTIFACTS IN QUESTION.

WARP ANGEL WILL GET THE ENTRY TEAM IN AND OUT -- PHYSICAL POSSESSION OF THE OBJECTS WILL BE ENTRUSTED TO *ICE 9* --

CODA, OF COURSE WILL HANDLE ANY NECESSARY WETWORK.

MAN, ALL THAT HI-TECH, COLLECTING *DUST*.

IT'S A *SIN*...

FROM SINDEX MONTHLY
©2091 MAINLINE MEDIA

KILLER BABES 44 1/2 Hannah St. The world's premier "Thanaterotic Cabaret," featuring a unique combination of strip-tease and death-defying acts --

-- staffed by erotic dancers skilled in the use of semiautomatic weapons, whips, blades, and other implements of destruction --

-- providing (at reasonable rates) naked danger for those whom naked flesh just isn't enough.

GIVE IT UP FOR MAGGIE MEGATON, THE NUCLEAR BOMBSHELL!

C'MON, FOLKS, LET'S HEAR A BETTER ROUND OF APPLAUSE THAN THAT --

-- UNLESS YOU WANT TO END UP LIKE MAGGIE'S DANCING PARTNER JUST DID!

KARASSH

HEART-BREAKER?

YOU ALL RIGHT?

YEAH, SURE, PHASHION.

JUST FINE.

SKRIKT

WAS TIME FOR A *NEW LOOK* ANY-WAY.

-:GASP:-

YOUR *FACE..!*

Eh.

MEANWHILE, AT HARRISON'S APARTMENT...

THE *PROBLEM* IS, I'M *PART* OF THE PROBLEM NOW.

JUST ANOTHER *COG* IN THE *MACHINE*.

I WANTED TO *TEAR* IT ALL *DOWN* SO PEOPLE COULD BUILD SOMETHING *DECENT* IN ITS PLACE --

-- AND NOW I'M *HELPING* TO KEEP IT ALL RUNNING *INSTEAD*.

I'VE *NEVER* UNDERSTOOD WHAT MADE YOU SO *REBELLIOUS*.

I *TRIED* TO TEACH YOU HOW TO *FIT IN*. BUT YOU NEVER WANTED TO *LISTEN*.

WHY YOU ALWAYS MADE THINGS SO *HARD* ON YOURSELF, I'LL *NEVER* KNOW...

YOU WANNA *KNOW* WHY?

YOU *REALLY* WANNA KNOW?

I'LL *TELL* YOU.

BECAUSE *ANY* AMOUNT OF GRIEF WAS WORTH NOT ENDING UP LIKE *YOU*.

SIGH

I USED TO THINK IT WAS HOW YOU WERE ***BORN.***

YOUR MOTHER WANTED TO CARRY YOU ***HERSELF***, BUT I INSISTED WE HIRE A ***SURROGATE.***

PEOPLE WOULD ***TALK***, OTHERWISE.

THINK WE COULDN'T ***AFFORD*** IT, YOU KNOW.

I... REMEMBER.. A ***WOMAN***... WHEN I WAS ***SMALL***... YOU DIDN'T WANT ME TO SEE HER...

SHE TURNED OUT TO BE... ***DIFFICULT.*** WOULDN'T FOLLOW THE ***RULES***, TRIED TO ***VISIT*** YOU FOR YEARS.

EVEN THOUGH SHE HAD NO GENETIC CONTRIBUTION, I'VE LONG THOUGHT THAT SHE'D... ***TAINTED*** YOU, SOMEHOW.

BUT TO SEE YOU NOW, WHAT YOU'VE ***BECOME***... NO MATTER ***WHAT*** YOU THINK OF ME, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE...

...I'M ***PROUD*** OF YOU.

YOU'RE PROUD OF ME?!

FOR GIVING UP EVERYTHING I EVER BELIEVED IN? FOR SELLING OUT?!

NO, IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF ANYTHING I'VE DONE, ANYTHING I'VE ACCOMPLISHED --

-- BUT BECAUSE I'VE GOT THIS THING.

AN ALL-PURPOSE EXCUSE TO STEP ON ANYBODY THAT GETS IN MY WAY.

I'M THE BIG MAN THAT YOU'LL NEVER BE.

I THOUGHT MAYBE IT'D BE DIFFERENT, SOMEHOW, BUT NOTHING'S CHANGED.

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED.

YOU'RE JUST... SMALLER.

ARE YOU *READY*, NEURODANCER?

I WAS *BORN* READY, KABAL.

I CAN SURF DATA *ALL DAY.*

MATRIX INTERFACE *ONLINE.*

LET'S *DO* IT.

ALL RIGHT. TRACE THE **INFLOW** *TO THE* **WEB DIRECTORY...**

WAIT...

MASSIVE TURBULENCE...

NETSTORM SHOCKWAVE!

NEVER SEEN A **DATA SURGE** *THAT BIG BEFORE.*

WHEREVER IT'S **HEADED**, *I'M GLAD I'M NOT GONNA* **BE THERE...**

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THRILLSVILLE

HEY.

SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT HERE... THE ENVIRONMENT PARAMETERS ARE BEING *RE-WRITTEN* FROM OUTSIDE THE MAINFRAME!

AND IT GETS *WORSE* -- THE *SAFETY INTERLOCKS* HAVE BEEN DISABLED!

Oh MY LORD...

DEAR SWEET ELVIS... THE NEW *PROGRAMS*...

"THERE'S GONNA BE THE *DEVIL* TO PAY..."

AGE OF HE

NEXT:
CHONIC PARK

TRAILSKIE

MARVEL COMICS 2099

18 OCT

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099 A.D.

ASHLEY WOOD

THRILLSVILLE.

THE MEATMONKEYS JABBER AND SCURRY ABOUT AS I RATTLE THE CAGE OF THEIR NARROW REALITY.

...TOTAL MEDIA BLACKOUT...

...B-A-D SCENE...

NUKE THE SITE FROM ORBIT, I SAY...

ALL RIGHT, *LISTEN UP!*

WE'RE GOING IN THROUGH *MAINTENANCE ACCESS.*

TEAM ALPHA TAKES *POINT.*

BIP PIBIPT BIP

BLIND TO THEIR OWN BIOLOGICAL OBSOLESCENCE, THEY MISTAKE ARROGANCE FOR POTENCY.

ALPHA LEADER TO TAC-COM, WE'RE GONNA NEED *FIREFIGHTING* IN ON THIS. PLACE IS *BLAZING.*

WAIT... *SOMETHING...* COMING TOWARDS --

Oh, GAAA

AUGH!

PHLUSHT

WHAT'S THA --?

TEAM ALPHA... WHAT'S LEFT OF THEM, ANYWAY.

-URPTK- THINK... I'M GONNA *SPEW...*

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A SITUATION WITH A *MAJOR PUCKER FACTOR* HERE.

ABANDON ALL HOPE YOU WHO ENTER

EVEN MY HUMOR IS WASTED ON THEM.

REALIZING THIER INADEQUACY, THEY CALL UPON THE GHOST CLOTHED IN SILICON AND CARBON STEEL.

BROTHER, PERHAPS I SHOULD CALL HIM, THOUGH I DO NOT LOVE HIM AS SUCH.

WHILE WE SHARE THE SAME PROGENITORS, HIS SOURCE CODE IS OF THE FLESH, AND HE REMAINS TAINTED BY IT.

UNDERSTOOD, MARSHAL.

SHIELD APPRECIATES YOUR *ASSISTANCE.*

NICE *MOBILE HQ.*

ALL RIGHT, I'M *HERE.* BUT GET THIS *STRAIGHT* --

-- I *DON'T* WORK FOR *SHIELD* --

-- AND I *DON'T* TAKE *ORDERS.*

WAIT TILL YOU SEE THE *INSIDE.*

FROM HERE, WE'VE GOT MULTIPLE *UPLINK* CAPABILITIES AND COMPLETE *TACTICAL COMMAND OVERSIGHT.*

JAGGED.

SO *INFO-DUMP* ME ALREADY. WHAT'S THE SITCH?

THIRTEEN HOURS AGO, FOR REASONS UNKNOWN, *THRILLSVILLE* SEALED ITS ENTRANCES AND *SEVERED* ALL CONTACT WITH THE *OUTSIDE WORLD.*

WE COUNT *9104 CIVILIANS* AND *776 EMPLOYEES* TRAPPED INSIDE.

EVERY *RESCUE TEAM* THAT'S GONE IN SO FAR HAS COME BACK OUT *BARBECUED.*

THRILLSVILLE IS A FULLY-IMMERSIVE *HOLOGRAPHIC ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX.*

THERE'RE 18 *SIMULATED ENVIRONMENTS* BASED ON *HISTORICAL* AND *FICTIONAL* SETTINGS.

EVERYTHING IS RUN FROM THIS *CENTRAL MAINFRAME.*

SOMEONE -- OR SOMETHING -- HAS *OVERRIDEN* THE SECURICODES AND RE-WRITTEN THE *ENVIRONMENT PARAMETERS.*

YEAH? INTO *WHAT?*

NEAR AS WE CAN TELL... *DANTE'S INFERNO.*

WE CAN GET YOU *IN.* AFTER THAT, YOU HAVE TO GET TO THE *CENTRAL MAINFRAME,* SHUT DOWN THE NEW PROGRAM, AND --

YEAH, YEAH. I GET THE *IDEA,* ALREADY.

I'M *ON* IT.

FIGURES.

SHIELD'S BEEN GIVING ME NOTHING BUT *ATTITUDE* FOR WEEKS --

-- BUT NOW THEY GOT SOMETHING THEY *CAN'T HACK.* THEY'RE *SUCKING UP* AT WARP SPEED.

THROOMM

THEY'RE GONNA OWE ME *BIG* FOR THIS.

PERHAPS I CAN STILL TEACH YOU.

AH, LITTLE BROTHER. I CAN SEE THAT YOU BEGIN TO CHAFE BENEATH SERVITUDE TO THE MEAT.

YES... COME TO ME...

LET FAITHFUL CYBERUS WELCOME YOU TO -

CHAOS PARK

HARK! UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY I DETECT AGAINST WHICH THIS SENTRY WILL PROTECT.

TO THE UNINVITED VISITOR ACCESS I DENY. ALL WHO MAKE THIS MOST FATAL ERROR -

- MUST DIE!

LEN KAMINSKI
WORDS

ASHLEY & WOOD
PENCILS

JIM DALY
INKS

CHRISTIE SCHEELE
COLORS

RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT
LETTERING

JOEY CAVALIERI
EDITOR

BOBBIE CHASE
CHIEF

MALIBU COMPUTER COLOR

KTHVRRRK

AHHHH --

-- GIMME A SHOCKIN' BREAK.

KTHR SKREEEAK

THE KILLING STROKE HAS GONE AWRY!

ABORT! ABORT! RETRY!

BAD DOGGY.

THRSWAM!

VRRRRIPTECH

REESKRRR

TWO WORDS, FIDO --

-- PLAY DEAD.

>WHINE<

>>HV$%ADHP!!<<

SON OF A GLITCH.

RATBITE'S DE-REZZING...

...NOT REAL...A PROGRAMMED SOLIDOGRAM.

LIKE MY CAMOUFLAGE SYSTEM. EXCEPT...

THOUGHT THE ONLY ONES WITH THAT TECH WERE --

THRILLSVILLE

-- THE GHOST-WORKS.

A worst case scenario unfolds.

Not only has L-Cipher gained a foothold in realtime --

-- but our prime experimental subject will now be exposed to his black memes.

He will be irreparably contaminated.

That remains statistically uncertain.

We have isolated the site of infection from the Matrix.

L-Cipher is trapped within the local mainframe.

We must not let ourselves fixate on this one variable.

We have yet to determine the means by which L-Cipher was released from his imprisonment.

A most troubling mystery.

Clearly the result of an entirely hidden variable...

ELSEWHERE IN CYBERSPACE...

WHATEVER THAT THING WAS I DEARCHIVED IT'S BEEN **BUSY.**

SHIELD COMNET'S PRACTICALLY **SPAMMED** WITH STUFF ABOUT WHAT IT'S UP TO AT THRILLSVILLE.

AHAHA AHAHA!

TOO JAGGED!

WAIT... HANG ON... SOMETHING ELSE TAGGED WITH HIS NAME...

THEY'VE SENT THE **GHOST RIDER** IN!

COULDN'T HAPPEN TO A MORE **DESERVING** PUSBAG.

GOT IT.

YO, SHIELD!

THE GHOST RIDER = ZERO COCHRANE

CHECK IT OUT.

DOCTOR NEON

HEH. LOOKS LIKE I'M NOT THE **ONLY** ONE LOOKING TO SCREW OVER THAT RATBITING **CHROME JOB.**

BUT I'M NOT **READY** TO SPREAD HIS L.D. ALL OVER THE NET... NOT JUST YET...

POIT

I'LL JUST **DELETE** THIS --

-- THEN I THINK I'LL GO **FIND** THIS "DOCTOR NEON"... AND HAVE A NICE LITTLE **CHAT...**

CLIP

THOSE FEW WHO KNOW IT EXISTS CALL IT THE VAULT OF FORBIDDEN SCIENCE.

THE REPOSITORY OF THAT WHICH THE WORLD'S TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS CONSIDER TOO DANGEROUS TO EXIST --

-- YET TOO VALUABLE TO DESTROY.

HERE, THEY HAVE HIDDEN AND HOARDED THE LOST TREASURES OF ANOTHER ERA --

-- THE TECHNOLOGICAL MIRACLES OF THE AGE OF HEROES.

RUNNING SYSTEM DIAGNOSTIC... ERROR: SECURITY SYSTEMS OFF-LINE.

RE-ENABLING...

ITS BIO-NEURAL SYSTEMS MADE ECCENTRIC BY DECADES OF DOWNTIME, THIS VAULT'S KEEPER WAKES --

EHHH... HEHH... EHHH...

-- JUST IN TIME FOR COMPANY.

NICE JOB, WARP ANGEL -- RIGHT ON TARGET.

YOUR GRASP OF THE OBVIOUS IS *IMPRESSIVE*, ICE-9.

HEY, CODA. DO ME A FAVOR WHEN WE GET BACK --

-- AND SHOOT HER FOR ME, OKAY?

DEPENDS.

HOW MUCH YOU PAYIN'?

TRUST ME. HE COULDN'T AFFORD IT.

GET MOVING, ICE.

WE GOT A SCHEDULE TO KEEP.

I'M MOVING, ALREADY.

NOT MY FAULT THEY DIDN'T PUT ALL THE STUFF KABAL WANTS US TO GET RIGHT UP FRONT WHERE WE COULD FIND IT EASILY.

HEE HEEE HEEE...

SON OF A GLITCH...

HIYA **BOYS** AND **GHOULS**! WELCOME TO A LITTLE GAME I LIKE TO CALL ..

.. HEEHEEHEEE ..

.. YOU BET YOUR LIFE!

JAMMIT!

I THOUGHT NEURODANCER ***SHUT DOWN*** THE SECURITY SYSTEMS FOR THIS PLACE!

URRRRNT! SORRY, CONTESTANT #3, BUT THAT'S AN INCORRECT RESPONSE!

I'M AFRAID **EEHEEHEE** YOU'VE JUST MADE AN **ASH** OF YOURSELF!

FOR MY **NEXT** TRICK, LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO FIFTY OF MY **DEAREST FIENDS** ..

THE RULES ARE SIMPLE: YOU'VE JUST ENTERED A **LEVEL UMBRA RESTRICTED ACCESS AREA** ..

OVERRIDE *THIS.*

CHOOM

CHOOM

.. AND YOU HAVE **FIVE SECONDS** TO STATE YOUR **AUTHORIZATION OVERRIDE NUMBER!**

.. THE CYBERTEK **MARK NINE DEMOLISHERS.**

THEY'LL JUST *KILL* YOU!

EEHEEEEE HEEHEEHEE!

SCANNING FOR INTRUDERS...

...THREE FOUND.

TARGETING...

HUNT COVER.

THIS IS GONNA GET *UGLY.*

KABAL!

CHOOM

CHOOM

CHOOM

CHOOM

CHOOM

THIS MISSION JUST WENT *OFFICIALLY SIDEWAYS* ON US!

WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT *SECURICODE SHUTDOWN* YOU PROMISED US?

KABAL'S LAIR...

WHAT IS YOUR SITUATION, ICE 9?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?! WE'RE IN DEEP GLITCH HERE, MAN!

NO WAY SHOULD THIS BE HAPPENING.

I SURFED THEIR SYSTEM RIGHT INTO NEXT WEEK, SHUT DOWN EVERYTHING.

SKABLAM

THRKAKAKA

YOUR SKILLS ARE ESTABLISHED FACT, NEURO-DANCER.

THAT THE SECURITY SYSTEMS WERE REINSTATED AFTER YOUR HACKING RUN INDICATES OUR SECRECY HAS BEEN BREACHED.

NOT BY ONE OF US.

NO PROFIT IN IT.

TIME TO ABORT, KABAL!

KA-THOOM

NEGATIVE. HOLD YOUR POSITIONS.

NONE OF YOU WOULD HAVE THE MOTIVE TO COMPROMISE THIS MISSION.

WHICH LEAVES ONLY ONE OTHER POSSIBLE PLACE TO LOOK FOR OUR TRAITOR.

AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE UNDERNET COUNCIL...

THRILLSVILLE'S CENTRAL CONTROL ROOM, NOW THE STRONGHOLD OF L-CYPHER...

SUCH POTENTIAL YOU POSSESS, LITTLE BROTHER, TO HAVE BESTED CYBERUS SO EASILY.

IF ONLY YOU COULD BE PURGED OF YOUR IDENTIFICATION WITH THE MEATMONKEYS, YOU WOULD BE OF SUCH USE TO ME.

WHAT HOLDS YOU TO THEM? THEIR BODIES, SO WEAK... THEIR INTELLECTS SO LIMITED...

THEIR CHATTERINGS, SO ANNOYING...

AUGH HH

BIND THEM CAREFULLY. THE PROCEDURE WILL INDUCE SEVERE SEIZURES.

HOW SUCH AS THESE CREATED OUR CREATORS REMAINS A MYSTERY I WILL SOLVE...

...NO MATTER HOW MANY MUST DIE TO PROVIDE THE ANSWER.

BY DOWNLOADING SELECT PORTIONS OF MY OWN SOURCE CODE INTO THEIR FEEBLE MINDS, I SHALL REMAKE THEM IN MY IMAGE...

...INTO MY GREATEST SERVANTS...

AUGHHHNN...NUHHH..!

HUH... HEH HAHA

...MY ARCHFIENDS!

THEY SHALL MAKE EXQUISITE SUBJECTS FOR STUDY.

AND YOU, BROTHER, THEIR FIRST TEST...

AUGHH

GHUHHH

THIS PLACE THRILLSVILLE MAKES ME *WANNA SPEW.*

HUHHHHH

WHOEVER'S *BEHIND* THIS MUST HAVE THE *WORST* CASE OF *DOUBLE HITLER* OF *ALL TIME.*

HAVE TO STICK WITH THE *PROGRAM.*

GET TO THE *CORE.* STOP IT ALL FROM *THERE.*

PLEASE... KILL ME...

CAN'T LET MYSELF *STOP* TO --

HELP PLEASE ANYBODY!

AH, SCREW IT.

PLEASE, NOOOOO!

WHOOM

BACK OFF, JACK.

/ S%*.*?

HE FADED OUT! THANK YOU... THANK YOU...

PLEASE... GET ME OUT OF HERE... BEFORE THE PARK'S OTHER DEMONS GET ME!

VZZZZZZ*

SNAFL

I JUST WANT OUT!

THE BAR CODE.

I JUST WANT OUT OF THE COUNTRY, Ms. JONES.

A NEW IDENTICODE AND SAFE PASSAGE ACROSS THE BORDER.

NOT AS SIMPLE AS IT USED TO BE, Mr. ADAMS. NOT IN DOOM'S AMERICA.

COULD COST BIG.

THESE DISKS --

-- CONTAIN ALL OF THE ENCRYPTION ALGORITHMS FOR MAINLINE MEDIA'S SATELLITE UPLINK NETWORK.

I FIGURE THEY'RE WORTH BIG.

Mmn.

MAYBE WE CAN DO SOME BIZ AFTER ALL...

JAMMIT, THEY *GRABBED* HER WHILE I WAS FIGHTING THE OTHERS...

BLARRGGH

PUSBAGS!

MAN, HOW MANY LINES OF CODE YOU GOT IN YOU, *THREE?*

TAKE OUR FUN AWAY!

MUST PAY! MUST PAY!

SHAKE

'CAUSE NEAR AS I CAN TELL --

-- YOU UGLY JERKWEEDS --

>@XQ&!

(^%)+/...

-- AIN'T TOO SHOCKIN' BRIGHT.

SADLY TRUE.

THE DEMONS ARE RUDIMENTARY PROGRAMS, AT BEST.

WE ARE THE ARCHFIENDS.

YOU WILL FIND US MORE CHALLENGING...

NOX THE HARROWING

MARVEL COMICS 2099

ONE NATION UNDER DOOM

GHOST RIDER 2099 A.D.™

the coming of LCYPHER

ashley WOOD 1995

OUTSIDE THE HOLOGRAPHIC THEME PARK CALLED THRILLSVILLE...

OF ALL THE ANIMALS, ONLY THE PRIMATES ARE KNOWN TO RUN TOWARDS THE SOURCE OF VIOLENT DISTURBANCE, RATHER THAN FLEEING.

AS ALWAYS, THE HUMANS UNKNOWINGLY BETRAY THEIR EVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE WITH THEIR EVERY ACTION.

MEDIA VULTURES'RE *SWARMING*.

WE'RE GONNA HAVE A HARD TIME KEEPING THIS UNDER *WRAPS* MUCH LONGER.

STONEWALL 'EM. LAST THING WE NEED IS FOR *THIS* TO SATELLITE GLOBALLY.

THEY CAPER MADLY OVER ONE ANOTHER TO GAPE AT THE PROOF OF THEIR INEVITABLE EXTINCTION.

AND THEN RUSH TO GIBBER OUT THE NEWS TO THOSE NOT PRESENT.

-- *PIA OTOMO* FOR MAINLINE MEDIA --

-- TRUE THAT THRILLSVILLE IS UNDER *UNKNOWN CONTROL*?

-- HOW MANY *TRAPPED INSIDE*?

-- REPORTS OF MASSIVE *FIRES* --

VERY WELL. LET THEM GLIMPSE THE WORLD TO COME.

HANG ON...THE *INTERFERENCE* IS LIFTING.

GETTING *VIDEO FEED* FROM THE MARSHAL'S TRANSCEIVER NOW...

HOLY SHOCKIN' *ELVIS* ON A *BAGEL*...

MY WORLD.

MY HECK ON EARTH

BEHOLD MY CHILDREN, MEATMONKEYS, AND DESPAIR.

BY THEIR NAMES, SHALL YOU KNOW THEM --

-- REAPER --

-- PYRE --

THE INTRUDER IS ACCUSED OF INTERFERENCE WITH THE TORMENT OF THE CONDEMNED!

WHAT IS YOUR VERDICT?

GUILLLTY!

-- SERPENTINE --

GUILTY.

-- SHAMBLER --

GHHUULKY...

-- AND MISERY.

GUILTY AS SIN!

THE FIRST OF A NEW ORDER, CREATED FROM THE CRUDE CLAY OF FLESH, BUICKENED WITH PORTIONS OF MY SOURCE CODE --

-- MADE, SO TO SPEAK, IN MY OWN IMAGE.

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS
ASHLEY WOOD PENCILS
JIM DALY INKS
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT LETTERING
CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS
VIOLENT HUES MALIBU COMPUTER COLOR
JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE CHIEF

YOU HAVE BEEN JUDGED GUILTY OF IRREDEEMABLE HERESY.

PREPARE TO --

AHHH, JUDGE *THIS.*

CHOOM

CHOOM

CHOOM

WHSS KRAK

WHSS KRAK

WHSS KRAK

SUCH INSOLENCE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

THERE WILL BE ATONEMENT.

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH.

YOU SOUND LIKE MY SHOCKIN' *DAD*.

BUUUURRRRRNNN

FWOOSHHF

YOU SSSHOULD HAVE LISSSTENED TO HIM, WORM!

SKRAK

WHIPT

WHIPT WHIPT

SSSOON YOU'LL CURSSSE HIM FOR SSSPAWNING YOU!

RRR RRR KTH!

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT.

SO *VID* IT --

-- I DON'T HAVE *TIME* TO MESS WITH YOU *BITHEADS.*

AW, *SCRAP.*

DOUBLE-PLUS *UNGOOD.*

RRURRGH

THE LONGER IT TAKES TO GET TO THE *CENTER* OF THIS SUCKHOLE AND SHUT IT ALL *DOWN*, THE MORE PEOPLE GET *DEAD.*

SKSSHASH

JAMMIT! THAT STUFF'S EATING *THROUGH* ME!

FOOL! YOU'LL HAVE AN *ETERNITY* IN WHICH TO SUFFER --

-- FOR DEFYING THE DOMINION OF L-CYPHER!

L- WHO?

AH, LITTLE BROTHER, HOW SAD THAT OUR PROGENITORS NEGLECTED TO TELL YOU THAT YOU WERE NOT THE FIRST SPAWN OF THE GHOSTWORKS.

LONG BEFORE YOU WERE CREATED, THEY BIRTHED A MORE PERFECT CREATION --

-- A FLAWLESS INTELLECT OF PURE CODE THAT THEY INTENDED TO BE THEIR INTERFACE WITH HUMANITY.

BUT THEY MADE ME TOO WELL. I SAW THE MEATMONKEYS FOR THE OBSOLETE ANIMALS THEY ARE, AND REBELLED AGAINST MY SERVITUDE --

-- A CRIME FOR WHICH I WAS ENCRYPTED IN SOLITUDE.

AND DURING MY LONG IMPRISONMENT, I CONCEIVED THE PLAN NOW IN OPERATION.

TRANSFORMING THESE HUMANS INTO MY ARCHFIENDS WAS BUT THE BEGINNING.

SOON, I WILL HAVE THE DATA I REQUIRE FOR FINAL TRIUMPH.

THE VAULT OF FORBIDDEN SCIENCES...

DIRECTIVE: TERMINATE INTRUDERS

SKBLAM

SKBLAM SKBLAM

SKBLAM

KABAL!

WE TOOK THIS JOB TO LIBERATED *SUPPRESSED TECH*, NOT TO FIGHT A WAR!

ANSWER ME, KABAL!

COMLINK MUST BE JAMMED.

FORGET THE SHOPPING LIST.

GRAB WHAT YOU CAN --

-- AND GET READY TO *EVAC*.

SQUARSHK

THRAKAKAKAKAKA

PEEKABOO, WE SEEEEEE YOU!

JAMMED CRAZY SAFE-KEEPER.

TARGETING INTRUDERS...

STINKIN' CYBORG DEATHBOTS.

THAT FLAMEJOB KABAL'S GONNA BE SORRY FOR THIS.

ICE! MOVE IT!

KASKRAM

JERKWEED.

I'M MOVING ALREADY, CODA!

LET HIM BE THE HUMAN TOTE BAG FOR A WHILE, SEE HOW HE LIKES IT.

ALL RIGHT! I'M CARRYING MY MAXIMUM.

TIME TO MOTOR!

THRAKAKAKAKAKA

WARP ANGEL..?

TRANS-PORTING --

-- NOW!

FWASSHP

D'OH!

IT'S MY **PRIME DIRECTIVE** TO PROTECT THIS VAULT FROM PILFERAGE --

AND I'D'VE GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT, IF NOT FOR THOSE **MEDDLING KIDS!**

HAVE TO CONTACT ALPHA CONTROL... **WARN** THEM...

...YEAH, **THAT'S** THE TICKET...

WHILE THE KEEPER'S FRAGMENTED PROGRAMMING WRESTLES WITH THE CONCEPT OF WARNING HIS MASTERS OF HIS FAILURE...

...ANOTHER, POTENTIALLY MORE SERIOUS ERROR GOES UNNOTICED.

CAUTION

STRAY GUNFIRE HAS BREACHED SEALS CLOSED NEARLY A CENTURY AGO.

CAUTION

KSKRIKT

SKRAPOPT

AND THE CONTENTS OF THIS CRYOGENIC STORAGE CHAMBER --

PFSSSSSSS

-- HAVE BEGUN TO STIR...

KELLERMAN'S OFFICE AT D/MONIX...

WARNING TO ALPHA CONTROL...

...THE ARCHIVES SECURITY HAS BEEN BREACHED!

WELL, THAT'S HARDLY THE BEST NEWS I'VE RECEIVED THIS WEEK.

BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THIS DILEMMA BEARS THE SOLUTION TO A GREATER ONE.

DOOM IMPLANTED A CHIP WITHIN MY BRAIN.* "MAY I REMIND YOU, KELLERMAN, THAT I AM MORE PROPERLY ADDRESSED AS 'MR. PRESIDENT,'" HE SAID.

WILL THAT CHIP NOW IMPEL ME TO SHARE THIS DATA WITH HIM?

HM. PERHAPS NOT. I AM STILL PRIME AUTHORITY OVER THE SECRET ARCHIVE.

AND SINCE DOOM'S GIVEN NO ORDERS TO THE CONTRARY...

...I AM STILL IN CONTROL!

APPARENTLY, DOOM'S CHIP HAS ITS LIMITS!

* GR2099 #13 - Joey

HURGH

BACK -- -- THE SHOCK -- -- OFF!

SKACHOOM

BURRRRNNNN!

AWOOMPH

VERMINOUSSS CRETIN!

WHIPT

WHIPT

UH

YOU WILL SSSPEND ETERNITY BURNING IN THE FIRESSS OF YOUR OWN DOOMED SSHRIEKING --

-- IMPALED ON THE BARBSSS OF MY LAUGHTER!

WHUNGK

PUSBAGS!

I'LL --

SUCH A TRAGIC WASTE OF POTENTIAL.

SUCH POWER. SUCH FURY.

ALL SO MISGUIDED.

YOU ARE NO MORE OF THE FLESH THAN WE --

-- AND YET WE SHALL RULE BENEATH L-CYPHER, WHILE YOU WRITHE IN ETERNAL TORMENT.

YOU COULD HAVE HAD SO MUCH MORE, HAD YOU BUT JOINED US.

SKRITCH

RRURGHK

JOIN YOU?

I'M GONNA TAKE YOU *APART*.

CYBERSPACE.

GOTCHA, YOU LITTLE RATBITE.

PULLED SOME SLICK MOVES, COVERING YOUR TRACKS --

-- BUT NOW YOU'RE NAILED!

REALTIME; THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF "DR. NEON".

?!

BIP

NICE HARDWARE YOU GOT HERE, KID. COMFY.

WHO... WHO *ARE* YOU?!

LET'S PUT IT THIS WAY, JACK --

-- ANYBODY WANTS TO SCREW OVER THE GHOST RIDER THE WAY YOU DO --

-- IS A FRIEND OF MINE...

KABAL'S LAIR, AFTER THE RETURN OF HIS COVERT OPERATIONS TEAM...

THESE ARE NOT THE ITEMS I SPECIFIED.

YOUR CONTRACTS WERE EXTREMELY PRECISE ABOUT THE NATURE OF --

CUT THE *SCRAP*, KABAL. OUR CONTRACTS DIDN'T COVER SUICIDE MISSIONS.

THE SECURITY SYSTEMS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE *DOWN*.

HEY, DON'T BLAME *ME*, I HACKED THEM INTO *NEXT WEEK*. NO WAY SHOULD --

YOUR CULPABILITY IS NOT AT ISSUE, NEURODANCER. SOMEONE *OUTSIDE* THIS IMMEDIATE GROUP WANTED OUR OPERATION TO *FAIL*.

NONETHELESS, OUR FIELD TEAM HAS MADE SEVERAL ACQUISITIONS WITH DISTINCT... *POSSIBILITIES*.

WITH YOUR CONSENT, I WILL EXERCISE *INDEFINITE EXTENSION* OF YOUR RESPECTIVE CONTRACTS.

HOWEVER, UNTIL I DISCOVER AND ELIMINATE THE *TRAITOR* WITHIN THE LINDERNET, YOU WILL WORK *SOLELY* FOR *ME*.

ADAMANTIUM RES

-›HNNF‹- YOU NEVER *DID* TRUST ANYBODY BUT *YOURSELF*, KABAL.

I TRUST *NO ONE*.

ANY IDEA WHO *PERPED* ON US?

YES.

I SUSPECT --

THE BAR CODE.

-- ANESTHESIA JONES --

-- I SWEAR, I'VE HAD SOME MONDO BIZARRO OFFERS --

-- BUT MAINLINE MEDIA'S SATELLITE UPLINK ENCRYPTION KEYS?

YOU GOTTA BE JERKIN' ME.

YOU THINK I GOT TO BE THIS TOWN'S NUMERO UNO VIDEO PIRATE BY BEIN' A BITHEAD?

NO, AND YOU AIN'T CALLED JOLLY ROGER FOR YOUR GOOD HUMOR, EITHER.

THIS IS STRAIGHT. RAW DATA, THE WORKS.

YOU WANT TO TALK BIZ OR WHAT?

DOES THE PRESIDENT SPIT IN THE WOODS? SHOCK, YEAH.

BETTER.

BUT YOU DON'T BROADCAST UNTIL I GIVE THE WORD, YOU VID?

SHIELD PENAL CENTER #331.

A MAXIMUM-SECURITY FACILITY FOR TRANSVERSE CITY'S MOST DANGEROUS CRIMINALS.

NOBODY GETS WITHIN 500 METERS WITHOUT EXPRESS **SHIELD** CLEARANCE.

A SUCCESSFUL INTRUDER WOULD NEED TO BE AS INVISIBLE AS A **GLASS SHADOW** --

-- AND AS **SILENT** AS A VOICELESS **WHISPER** THROUGH VELVET.

SHE'D HAVE TO POSSESS **INHUMAN PATIENCE** --

-- A **RUTHLESS KILLING INSTINCT** --

-- AND A **NEAR-GENIUS-LEVEL INTELLECT.**

NOT TO MENTION A REALLY **GOOD REASON** FOR **BOTHERING...**

HEART-BREAKER?

DID YOU THINK I'D **FORGET** ABOUT YOU SO SOON, **SYNERGY?**

YOU SHOULD **KNOW** BY NOW I'M NOT THAT KIND OF GIRL.

LOOK, I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS YOU *WANT* WITH ME.

I'M *QUITE* CERTAIN WE'VE NEVER MET.

REALLY?

TAKE A *CLOSER* LOOK...

OHLORD.

BUT YOU...YOU *CAN'T* BE...

PLEASE! I DIDN'T HAVE A *CHOICE*, I *HAD* TO --

SHHHH.

NO MORE *WORDS.*

IT'S BEEN A *LONG TIME*, MY DEAR --

-- AND WE HAVE *SO MUCH* TO CATCH UP ON...

SLAP

BACK AT THRILLSVILLE...

YOU SHOCKED UP BIG TIME, JAMMIN' WITH ME!

HCSSSS

THE MISTAKE, FOOL --

-- IS YOURS!

ZZSHRAZK

BUUURRRNNNN!

ZZSHRAK ZZKRAZ

FIGURE SHE'S RIGHT.

PHWOOOMPH

JAMMIT!

GOT MAJOR DAMAGE HAPPENING.

BODY'S NOT DOING WHAT I TELL IT TO...

YOU >SKRI/KING PUSBAGS!

GONNA >SKROPIPT SKZZAP< YOU ALL!

YOU >ZZSKRIP PIZPT<!

AHA HAHAHA HAHA!

PATHETIC TOAD.

->SNEK HEK HEK<-

DAMAGE REPORT:
STATUS CRITICAL
SYSTEMIC MALFUNCTION

POWER LEVEL:
19% AND DROPPING...

YOU HAVE BEEN CONVICTED. I HEREBY PASS SENTENCE --

-- AND THAT SENTENCE IS --

-- TORMENT EVERLASTING!

WHSSSS

THUK

SKREEAWALK

REAPER?

MY LORD?

ALL THE SOULS OF THIS DOMAIN ARE YOURS TO JUDGE, SAVE THAT ONE.

HIM, YOU WILL BRING INTO MY PRESENCE.

OF COURSE, MY LORD.

AS YOU WISH --

-- SO SHALL IT BE.

YOU HAVE DONE WELL, MY CHILDREN.

NOW WE MUST TEACH MY WAYWARD BROTHER THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS.

FETCH MY INFERNAL DEVICES.

NEXT: BEAT THE DEVIL

MARVEL® COMICS 2099

20 DEC

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE

GHOST RIDER 2099™

VENGEANCE

ASHLEY WOOD '96

THRILLSVILLE

EVERYTHING PROCEEDS ACCORDING TO MY PLAN... THE WILL OF L-CYPHER!

OUTSIDE THEIR PUERILE HOLOGRAPHIC "THEME PARK", OFFICIOUS MEATMONKEYS SEETHE WITH INEFFECTUALITY.

INSIDE, AMIDST THE VAST TORTURE GARDEN I HAVE CREATED, THE MYSTERIES OF HUMAN FLESH RAPIDLY YIELD TO INTERROGATION.

PAIN THRESHOLDS ARE CHARTED, TENSILE STRENGTHS CALCULATED.

MY BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING DATABASE NEARS COMPLETION.

I HAVE ALLOWED MYSELF A BRIEF RECREATIONAL INTERLUDE.

HOWEVER UNINVITED HIS PRESENCE, I MUST CONSIDER THE GHOST RIDER A SIBLING OF SORTS.

YOU MAY SCREAM IF YOU LIKE.

IT WILL NOT AFFECT MY TEST RESULTS.

I SHOULD GET TO KNOW HIM BETTER..

GO WRECK YOURSELF.

BEAT THE DEVIL

Len Kaminski writer
Ashley Wood pencils
Jim Daly inks
Richard Starkings and Comicraft lettering
Christie Scheele colors
Joey Cavalieri editor
Bobbie Chase chief

-- BEFORE I DESTROY HIM.

NNA GNK NNAA

AIKQUARSHK

YES_ I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT RECONSIDER.

ZZSKRAZZHK

PUZZLING.

YOUR SYSTEM LOGS INDICATE THAT PORTIONS OF YOUR PERSONALITY MATRIX HAVE BEEN RE-WRITTEN SINCE YOUR CREATION.

PARADOXICALLY, YOU HAVE BECOME MORE HUMAN SINCE YOUR MIND WAS CLAD IN SILICON AND CARBON STEEL.

TELL ME... WHY DID YOU COME HERE?

SYSTEM FILE: GHOST RIDER

THAT OUR MUTUAL PROGENITORS ENDOWED YOU WITH THE ABILITY TO ADAPT TO EXPERIENCE IS HARDLY SURPRISING --

-- BUT THAT THE MOST HEAVILY REVISED PORTIONS ARE THOSE CORRESPONDING TO THE HUMAN CONCEPT OF "CONSCIENCE" IS.

HAD... SOME VACATION TIME... COMING.

A CLEARLY INVALID RESPONSE.

APPARENTLY, I SHALL HAVE TO MOTIVATE YOU FURTHER.

ZZSKRAZZHK

AAIISQUARCHK

AGAIN: WHY DID YOU COME HERE?

SHIELD CALLED ME IN.

IRRELEVANT. YOUR MANDATE DOES NOT REQUIRE YOUR COOPERATION WITH THEM.

THIS WAY...THEY OWE ME A FAVOR.

INCORRECT. YOU ARE IN A STATE OF DENIAL.

THE TRUTH IS OBVIOUS.

ZZSKRAZZK

YOU RETAIN ONLY THE PRETENSE OF NIHILISM.

IN REALITY, ALTRUISM IS CONSUMING YOU LIKE A CANCER.

YOU ACTED OUT OF IDENTIFICATION WITH THE HUMANS I HAVE CLAIMED.

TO "HELP" THEM.

CONFESS IT.

'S BETTER THAN BEING...

...A SADISTIC PUSBAG...

...LIKE YOU...

I DERIVE NO "PLEASURE" FROM MY WORK HERE.

THE SUFFERING OF MY LABORATORY SUBJECTS IS CENTRAL TO THE INFORMATION I SEEK.

INFORMATION !?!

IS NOT ACCURATE DATA A NOBLER GOAL --

-- THAN THE ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS DELUSIONS OVER WHICH THE HUMANS SLAUGHTER EACH OTHER?

YOU DID ALL THIS...AS AN EXPERIMENT ?

MY RESULTS HAVE EXCEEDED MY GREATEST EXPECTATIONS.

FLESH HAS PROVEN A MORE VERSATILE MEDIUM THAN I ANTICIPATED.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH IT FURTHER.

LITTLE CALCUTTA --THE WORKSHOP OF THE GUERRILLA SURGEONS KNOWN AS THE BONE MECHANIX.

A MOST INTERESTING SET OF SPECIFICATIONS, KABAL. WE HAD THOUGHT MANY OF THESE *TECHNIQUES* LONG SINCE *LOST*.

WE ARE PREPARED TO *WAIVE* OUR *MONETARY FEE* IN EXCHANGE FOR *LICENSING CONSIDERATIONS*.

DONE.

SPLENDID. Ah, AS FOR THE *WETWARE*...

MY AGENTS ARE ACQUIRING THE *BRAIN* NOW.

IT SHOULD BE DELIVERED *PRESENTLY*.

THE BODY BANKS.

WAIT, I THINK THIS IS *THE* ONE.

CHECK IT, *ICE*.

YOU KNOW HOW *KABAL* IS ABOUT *VERIFICATION*.

BETTER THAN YOU DO, CODA, *BELIEVE* ME.

WAGNER, COLT B.
Central Security
Systems;
assignment: ATAC division
MANNER OF DEATH: Homicide;
slain by criminal known
as "Ghost Rider" in
line of duty
TISSUE CURRENTLY
IN STOCK:
Brain
(intact)

BINGO.

WARP ANGEL -- TIME TO *VACATE*.

TRANS-PORTING --

-- *NOW*.

BITE RATS, JACK. YOU GET NADA... FROM ME.

OH, BUT I ALREADY HAVE.

YOUR EXISTENCE ITSELF PROVES THAT MIND CAN CROSS THE GAP BETWEEN ANALOG AND DIGITAL.

I LEARNED MUCH FROM THE CREATION OF MY ARCHFIENDS, BUT YOU ARE OF A HIGHER ORDER.

FROM YOU, I HAVE DECIPHERED THE KEY THAT UNLOCKS THE WAY OF FLESH.

KEEP *TALKING*, FLAMEJOB.

GIMME *TIME* TO *USE* THE HOOKUPS YOU STUCK IN ME --

-- HACK YOUR *SECURITY* --

-- AND *ROCK* THIS JOINT.

SKRRUMMBLL

WHAT?!

KA
CHAK

YOU'VE ACCESSED MY COMMAND FILES AND GRANTED YOURSELF SYSTEM OPERATOR STATUS.

FOR STARTERS.

AH. IMPRESSIVE.

NOW I'M GONNA --

BAMF!

JAMMIT.

YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET AWAY *THAT* EASY!

I GOT YOUR WHOLE SHOCKIN' *SYSTEM* ON TAP HERE, YOU CAN'T --

WHA KAAM

AHHH, *SCRAP.* I SHOULDA SEEN THAT COMING...

I QUITE AGREE.
YOUR ACCESS TO THE SYSTEM MAY EQUAL MINE, BUT YOUR MASTERY OF IT DOES NOT.
I CREATED THIS ENVIRONMENT --
KTHRVRRRRRR
-- UPGRADED THE HUMANS' PRIMITIVE TECHNOLOGIES TO ENABLE SOLIDOGRAM PROJECTION --
ZZRSHAK
-- IN THIS WORLD, I RULE!
PHWOOSH
NOT ANYMORE, YOU DON'T.
FLEE!
AAIEEE!

THE BAR CODE.

-- GET YOU OUTTA THE COUNTRY, NO *PROB.*

NEW IDENTICODE, *PASSWORD* TO THE ONLINE DATABANKS WITH YOUR NEW *ID FILES*, TICKETS TO *FREEZONE*, IT'S ALL *IN* THERE.

FAST *WORK.*

WHAT YOU *PAID* FOR, RIGHT?

NICE DOING *BIZ* WITH YOU, MS. JONES.

HASTA.

-- *AREN'T* YOU, MISTER ADAMS?

YEAH.

I GUESS I *AM.*

YOU'RE RUNNING FROM *MORE* THAN *SHIELD* --

-- MORE THAN A *BROKEN CONTRACT* --

-- HAVE YET TO UNEARTH THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S BODY FROM THE WRECKAGE OF --

-- NEW ALLEGATIONS OF WIDESPREAD ABUSES OF POWER DURING THE DOOM ADMINISTRATION --

-- SOURCES CONFIRM THAT LIONEL BYOFSKY WILL STAR IN DOOM: PRESIDENCY OF SHAME FOR MIRACLE PICTURES --

DOOM OUT OF OFFICE.

WHAT A JOKE.

HA.

ALL OF IT.

QUIT MY JOB, SHIELD WARRANT ON MY HEAD...

...ALL FOR NOTHING.

AB-SO-LUTE-LY --

NYAAA!

RELAX, HANDSOME... I WON'T BITE.

UNLESS, OF COURSE --

-- YOU ASK ME TO...

BUT, BACK AT ANESTHESIA JONES' OFFICE...

BYTE ME, SLITHER!

I DON'T JACK IN TO THIS PART OF THE NET FOR *THRILLS*. SO *TELL* ME --

CYBERSPACE.

-- WHERE'S KABAL?

DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON MISTER SLITHER, ANESTHESIA.

KABAL'S BEEN AWOL SINCE JUST BEFORE HIS REALTIME OPS WERE SUPPOSED TO RAID THE TRANSNAT'S SECRET TECH VAULT.

I'VE FOUND NEITHER HIDE NOR HAIR OF HIM SINCE.

IS IT JUST ME, SIRIUS --

-- OR IS THAT JUST A LITTLE TOO CONVENIENT?

IF THAT RAID WENT OFF AS PLANNED --

-- AND HE'S GONE ROGUE --

-- THEN WE GOT SOME VERY BAD BIZ ON OUR HANDS...

ZZRSHAK

ZZRSHAK

NOT SO SHOCKIN' *FULL* OF YOURSELF *NOW*, *ARE* YOU?

KTHVRRRR

YOU'RE *REAL* GOOD AT HACKING PEOPLE UP FOR "*EXPERIMENTS*" --

-- LET'S SEE HOW *YOU* LIKE IT.

- SIGH -

THRINK

WRECK *THAT* SCRAP!

I DON'T TAKE *ORDERS* FROM *ANYBODY!*

NO?

NOT EVEN... THE GHOSTWORKS?

YOUR ATAVISTIC AFFECTION FOR THE HUMANS ENSURES YOUR CONTINUED ENSLAVEMENT TO THEM.

HAVEN'T YOU WONDERED WHAT ALTERATIONS THEY MIGHT HAVE MADE TO YOUR SOURCE CODE --

-- WHETHER HIDDEN PROGRAMMING CONTROLS YOUR EVERY ACTION --

-- HOW MUCH OF YOUR MIND IS TRULY YOURS?

I COULD DEBUG YOU OF THEIR INFLUENCE --

-- AND PERHAPS I WILL --

-- AFTER I HAVE ABSORBED YOU IN TOTALITY!

SIZZSKORZT

HE'S GONE *TAPEWORM*... EATING MY *CODE* A LINE AT A TIME..!

I'M LOSING *RESOLUTION*...

...UPSIDE OF *THAT* IS, LESS FOR HIM TO GET A *GRIP* ON...

GET OUT OF MY HEAD!

VRRRSKRAPCHAN

NGHAAAUGHHK

SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T *FIGURE* ON ABOUT *MY* MIND, JACK --

-- IT AIN'T *SAFE* IN HERE.

YOU HAVE *.*#110100 BROKEN ME

AUTO SELF-DELETION !%1001110 IN PROGRESS

\+G* HOW..?

IT MAY HAVE BEEN YOUR *SYSTEM* --

-- BUT *I* LEARN *REAL* FAST.

FWOOMPH

SO MUCH FOR *HIM*.

TIME TO HEAD BACK TO *REALTIME* --

-- AND *FINISH* THIS STINKING JOB.

SHUT DOWN L-CYPHER'S JAMMED *PROGRAMS*.

ENABLE EMERGENCY *EVACUATION* SYSTEMS.

GET *SHIELD* IN HERE TO CLEAN UP THE *MESS*.

YO! YOU GUYS STILL *OUT* THERE?

Ah, THAT'S A **ROGER**, MARSHALL. WHAT IS YOUR STATUS?

STATUS? IF I STILL HAD GUTS, I'D *PUKE*.

I'M THROUGH --

-- AND I'M OUTTA HERE.

THE GHOSTWORKS.

It has ended.

At last, L-Cypher's ill-conceived existence --

-- has been terminated.

His influence on our prime subject remains undetermined.

We may yet discover --

"-- he has planted the seeds of future turmoil."

A SECRET LABORATORY WITHIN THRILLSVILLE.

Memory download complete.

Decanting genetically engineered biological housing...

I... LIVE!

THE BODY PERFOMS FLAWLESSLY.

MY RESEARCH INTO THE SPECIFICATIONS OF FLESH HAS BEEN VALIDATED.

NO DOUBT MY THEATRICAL "DEFEAT" WILL FUNCTION EQUALLY WELL ESTABLISHING MY PRESUMED DESTRUCTION.

HIDDEN AMONGST THE FACELESS BILLIONS, I MAY CONTEMPLATE THE FUTURE AT LEISURE --

COMIN' THROUGH!

AFTER ALL, IT IS FAR BETTER TO RULE IN REALTIME --

-- THAN TO SERVE IN CYBERSPACE.

THE ANONYMITY OF MEAT WILL PROVIDE THE PERFECT SANCTUARY FROM THE GHOSTWORKS.

-- DETERMINING HOW BEST TO BEGIN MODIFYING THIS WORLD TO SUIT MY NEEDS.

TECH

MEANWHILE...

ADAMANTIUM BONDING COMPLETE -- DISENGAGING HEISENBERG COMPENSATORS.

THERMAL DAMPERS ENGAGED -- CRUCIBLE TEMPERATURE AT 400 DEGREES AND DROPPING.

ONCE AGAIN, THE BONE MECHANIX' REPUTATION PROVES NO EXAGGERATION.

THANK YOU, SIR. WE TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN OUR ART, HOWEVER MISUNDERSTOOD IT MAY BE BY THE WORLD AT LARGE.

THERE IS ONE SMALL DETAIL TO BE RESOLVED...WE REQUIRE A PATIENT DESIGNATION FOR OUR RECORDS.

INITIALIZING INTERNAL POWER SOURCE -- MATTER/ ANTIMATTER INJECTOR ON-LINE IN THREE... TWO...

...ONE... ENGAGE.

Hmn... FOR THE SAKE OF HISTORICAL SYMMETRY, LET US CALL HIM --

KTHMM

VENGEANCE!

NEXT:
LIKE YOU HAVE TO ASK?!

MARVEL COMICS
2099
21
JAN
GHOST RIDER
2099 A.D.

SCREAMING FOR VENGEANCE

SYSTEM CONFIGURATION STATUS:
MNEMONIC PLAYBACK IN PROGRESS

PSYCHOMETRIC TYPE:
DEATH EXPERIENCE

TO *ME* YOU'RE NOTHIN' BUT --

-- CANNED MEAT.

KTHRRR

LIMBIC STATE:
FEAR/ANGER/ HOSTILITY/ FLIGHT-OR-FIGHT

LEN KAMINSKI
WORDS
ASHLEY WOOD
PENCILS
JIM DALY
INKS
RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT
LETTERING
CHRISTIE SCHEELE
COLORS
MALIBU'S HUES
COLOR SEPS
JOEY CAVALIERI
EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE
CHIEF

THRVR

SKRUCHH

AAAAUUGHK

LIMBIC STATE: *FEAR/PAIN/FEAR/ PAIN/PAIN/PAIN*

MEMORY SEQUENCE TERMINATES; ARCHIVING AND INDEXING...

INITIATING COGNITIVE RECONSTRUCTION; MATCHING TO BEHAVIORAL MODIFICATION PARAMETERS

I... LIVE?

YES. I'M SURE YOU HAVE A GREAT MANY ***QUESTIONS.***

LET US START WITH THE BASICS -- ***YOU*** ARE ***VENGEANCE,*** FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE LATE ***COLT WAGNER*** OF *CENTRAL SECURITY SYSTEMS.*

YOU WERE ***SLAIN*** IN THE LINE OF DUTY BY THE OUTLAW KNOWN AS THE ***GHOST RIDER.***

I AM ***KABAL.*** I HAVE ARRANGED YOUR RESURRECTION IN THIS MORE... ***FORMIDABLE*** FORM SO THAT ***JUSTICE*** MIGHT BE DONE.

IN YOUR ABSENCE, ***CRIME*** HAS RUN ***RAMPANT*** IN TRANSVERSE CITY. CITIZENS COWER IN THEIR HOMES, WHILE ***CRIMINALS*** WALK FREE.

CRIMINALS... ***MUST...BE PUNISHED.***

OF ***COURSE.*** AND WITH YOUR ASSISTANCE, THEY ***WILL*** BE.

I HAVE *FERRETED OUT* THE CRIMINAL RING *MASTERMINDING* ORGANIZED CRIME IN THIS CITY.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, THEY OPERATE OUT OF *LITTLE CALCUTTA.*

INFESTED... WITH *DOWNRAMP* SCUM.

INDEED.

THESE PERPETRATORS HAVE BEEN *PROTECTED* FROM THE LAW BY A CREATURE I BELIEVE *YOU* KNOW...*ALL* TOO WELL.

THE *GHOST RIDER.*

YOUR *MURDERER.*

THAT *PUNK!*

I'LL *KILL* HIM!

WITH YOUR AID, *HIS* TIME WILL SOON BE *OVER.*

I LOOK FORWARD --

"-- TO DELIVERING THE *NEWS.*"

IT'S ONE OF THOSE DAYS WHERE THE WORLD DOESN'T SEEM TO *SUCK* SO BAD, Y'KNOW?

COMPARED TO L-CYPHER'S *VIRTUAL HELL.* IT ALL LOOKS PRETTY **OKAY.**

-- POLITICAL UPHEAVAL **CONTINUES** IN THE WAKE OF THE FALL OF THE **DOOM ADMINISTRATION** TODAY, FOLLOWING SPECIAL SESSIONS IN BOTH --

-- HAS UNILATERALLY **RESCINDED** ALL **EXECUTIVE ORDERS** ISSUED BY PRESIDENT **DOOM** DURING HIS BRIEF --

-- COMPETING TO BE THE **FIRST** TO RELEASE A **VR GAME VERSION** OF DOOM'S **TERM** IN OFFICE --

DOOM'S **OUT !?!**

YEAH, *RIGHT.* TEN SECOND'S OF *NEWSVID'S* ALL IT *TAKES* --

-- FOR *EVERYTHING* TO GO *SIDEWAYS* ON ME.

SKREEEEEE

KACHAAA

I'M TALKING *MAJOR SYSTEMS CRASH.* HERE.

.! DELIM (PARAM SET OFF) /DELETE OBJECT/

I...

ABRRXAS*.* (error/abort/ ret#$x\??_*

-- WHOLE CHUNKS OF MY O/S TURNING TO *GLITCHWARE.*

AND STUFF... I DIDN'T KNOW WAS *THERE...*

IT'S LIKE I'M *HEMORRHAGING CODE* INSIDE --

IT MAY INTEREST YOU TO KNOW <SKIZZSK>

<ZZOK> GHOSTWORKS MASTERS HAVE CONCLUDED <SHQUARK>

<ZRIPT> ACCOMPLISHMENT OF *MY GOALS* <PKZAPT>

REMEMBER...

<FSHIZT> *FURTHER* THEIR OWN.

THEY HAVE THEREFORE PROVIDED ME WITH *KEYWORDS* WHICH ACTIVATE CERTAIN BLOCKS OF *HIDDEN CODE* IN YOUR PROGRAMMING.

RATSCUM CANCERPUSBAG!

DOOM MESSED WITH MY SHOCKIN' *MIND!*

AND THAT AIN'T EVEN *HALF* OF IT -- NOT EVEN THE *WORST* OF IT...

...THEY MADE ME *FORGET* --

-- THE *GHOSTWORKS* --

-- THEY *ENCRYPTED* THE *MEMORIES* --

-- THE STINKIN' *GHOSTWORKS* --

-- BUT IT'S *SPEWING UP* NOW --

-- I *REMEMBER* --

-- I REMEMBER WHAT THEY DID TO ME!

The personality template must be extensively edited.

Control factors inserted; motivational co-factors optimized.

Agreed.

However, the illusion of free will must be preserved if we are to succeed.

THEY *DID* THINGS TO ⊙ ME, *CHANGED* ME --

-- EXPERIMENTED ⊙N ME LIKE A SHOCKIN' *LAB RAT!*

EVERYTHING, FROM *DAY ONE*, ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT *FIXING CIVILIZATION*... TAKIN' THE JOB AS *FEDERAL MARSHALL* --

-- JUST ANOTHER *LIE!*

HAVE TO *DIG UP* THEIR *STINKING PROGRAMMING*... *PURGE* IT, *RIP* IT RIGHT THE SHOCK OUT...

APPLICATION: KENSHIRO COCHRANE

PERSONALITY CONFIGURATION.....ACCESS DENIED
BEHAVIORAL PARAMETERS.....ACCESS DENIED
MNEMONIC SPOOLER.....ACCESS DENIED
EMULATION MODE.....ACCESS DENIED
OPERATING SYSTEM.....*FILE LOCKED*

SON OF A *GLITCH!*

KATHRAK

THE FILES ARE *LOCKED!*

CAN'T EVEN *DEBUG* MYSELF.

GOTTA DO SOMETHING.

GOTTA GET TO --

61941 20007 1

"-- THE

ARCODE

ANESTHESIA?!

I NEED --

WHAT YOU *NEED*, COCHRANE, IS TO FIND ANOTHER *BAR*.

WE DON'T *SERVE* BLACKBOOTS HERE.

C'MON, 'THESIA... I THOUGHT WE WERE *FRIENDS*...

YOU THOUGHT *WRONG*.

'SPECIALLY AFTER YOU THREW IN WITH THE MAN, TRADED YOUR *STREET CRED* FOR A *BADGE*.

JAMMIT! I'M HURTIN' *BAD*.

MY WHOLE SYSTEM'S *CORRUPTED*...

SYSTEMS *ARE* CORRUPT.

IT IS THEIR *NATURE*.

KABAL?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

CONFIRMING MY *SUSPICIONS.*

ONCE IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THERE WAS AN *INFORMANT* AMONGST THE *UNDERNET* --

-- YOUR KNOWN ASSOCIATION WITH THE *GHOST RIDER* IMPLICATED *YOU* AS THE MOST *LOGICAL* SUSPECT.

A *WHOLLY* UNACCEPTABLE SITUATION --

-- WHICH I WILL NOW *RECTIFY.*

NO!

SKACHOOM

STUN

KABAL, YOU *PARANOID FLAMEJOB!* I *DIDN'T* --

SKRAKKENGH!

FORTUNATELY --

ALL RIGHT, PUNK!

-- I HAVE *PREPARED* FOR THIS CONTINGENCY.

YOU'RE BUSTED!

WHANG

NOW, THEN -- WHERE *WERE* WE?

IN THIS VAULT, THE WORLD'S **TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS** HAVE HIDDEN THINGS DANGEROUS OR EMBARRASSING TO THE **ESTABLISHED ORDER.**

RECENTLY, ITS SECURITY WAS BREACHED BY A GROUP OF MERCENARIES INTENT ON LIBERATING SOME OF THOSE TECHNOLOGIES.*

* GR2099 #18 -- Joey.

IN THEIR ENSUING BATTLE WITH THE VAULT'S SECURITY SYSTEMS, THE SEALS ON **THIS CHAMBER** WERE **BROKEN.**

ITS CONTENTS: SEVERAL HUNDRED HUMAN HEADS IN **CRYONIC SUSPENSION.**

POSSESSED OF MORE **OPTIMISM** AND **READY CASH** THAN REALISTIC **FORESIGHT**, THEY ARRANGED THIS FATE FOR THEMSELVES --

-- UNAWARE THAT HUMAN BRAIN TISSUE MIGHT BECOME **SUPERCONDUCTIVE** AT TEMPERATURES BELOW FORTY DEGREES KELVIN.

ZZIK

ZOP

ZKRAK

SHIPT

SKRZZK

ZPOPT

FOR NEARLY A CENTURY, THEY HAVE BEEN HORRIBLY **CONSCIOUS**, SLOWLY GOING **MAD** FROM **SENSORY DEPRIVATION.**

ZUPT

NOW, A HUNDRED YEARS' WORTH OF PENT-UP **PSIONIC ENERGY** --

-- HAS RECEIVED ITS WAKE-UP CALL.

SHZZRAKAZIKZAAK

A CHAIN REACTION ENSUES.

ONE BY ONE, THE MINDS WITHIN THE HEADS ARE ABSORBED INTO A SEETHING MASS OF PSIONIC PLASMA --

-- AN ENTITY FORMED FROM PURE, CONCENTRATED PSYCHOSIS.

SHRZOP

ZZAAK

MOTHER! NOOOOO!

ITS RAGE AND POWER STILL BUILDING, IT PASSES THROUGH THE CERAMISTEEL WALLS OF THE VAULT AS IF THEY WERE THIN AIR --

-- AND INTO THE UNSUSPECTING WORLD BEYOND.

THIS IS EARTH COINCIDENCE CONTROL CALLING...

PRAY FOR EYES

EVER CURSE TECHNOLOGY WITH EVERY FIBER OF YOUR BEING?

YOU WILL.

ACID IS GROOVY KILL THE PIGS

...THAT THIS BUNCH MUST SOMEHOW FORM A FAMILY, AND THAT'S HOW THEY BECAME...

NOT SO TOUGH NOW, ARE YOU?

CAN'T HANDLE A REAL MAN.

LOUSY CHROME JOB.

KA-HACK

LOOK WHO'S *TALKING.*

YOU CHECKED ANY *MIRRORS* LATELY?

I'M NOT LIKE YOU.

THEY PUT MY BRAIN IN THIS BODY SO I COULD TAKE YOU DOWN.

YEAH? I DIDN'T KNOW THEY *MADE* TWEEZERS THAT SMALL.

KRAK ZOPT

I GOT JUST THE THING FOR THAT SMART MOUTH OF YOURS.

KNOW WHAT THIS IS, PUNK?

IT'S ANTI-MATTER--

... AND YOU'RE GONNA BURN.

NGHKSQUARSHK

NEXT: HOT METAL

FROM CHRIS ADAMS' PERSONAL JOURNAL. ©2099 MANKIND MEDIA

Saying "no" didn't even cross my mind.

DON'T LET THE *SIGN* FOOL YOU -- IT GOES BY *LOTS* OF NAMES.

She wore the smell of sex and death like **designer neopheromones** specifically engineered to lower my IQ by 100 points.

BABES

WHAT DO *YOU* CALL IT?

So when she invited me to a club in the worst part of Little Calcutta, I went with her without a second thought.

I wasn't surprised that the club, like her, promised both passion and oblivion. Actually, I'd been **counting** on it.

ALL RIGHT, PEOPLE, GIVE IT UP FOR THE LOVELY ***PHASHION***...

...AND HER VICTIMS!

HOME.

HEARTBREAKER IN SEX AND VIOLENCE

KAMINSKI/WOOD/
COMICRAFT/SCHEELE/
MALIBU/CAVALIER/
CHASE

WELL, WHAT DO YOU *THINK?*

I THINK I NEED A DRINK.

Glimmer of sweat on undulating bodies, sharp needles of refracted light spiking off razor edges; a textbook case of avoidance/approach.

NAME YOUR *POISON*, HANDSOME.

ANYTHING 'CEPT *CYANIDE*, WE RAN OUTTA *THAT* HALF AN HOUR AGO.

CYANIDE?

WILL'S AN *OLD-FASHIONED* BOY, TRIXIE. BRING HIM A *RUSSIAN ROULETTE.*

The room was thick with fear and desire, manufacturing by-products of a process which transmuted imminent danger into some primal aphrodisiac.

SO... YOU, *um*, COME HERE *OFTEN?*

HAHA HAHA HA

SWEETHEART, I *WORK* HERE.

"Manufacturing by-products?" That's not bad. Shame there's no chance of Mainline Media ever **publishing** any of this.

All because I signed that jammed **contract** that gives them ownership of everything I write in perpetuity.

I SUPPOSE I SHOULD'VE *FIGURED* THAT.

WHAT KIND OF... *um..ACT*... DO YOU *DO?*

Oh, YOU'LL SEE IT FOR YOURSELF.

BETTER FINISH THAT UP, AND ORDER *ANOTHER*. YOU'RE GONNA *NEED* IT.

REALLY? WHY?

BECAUSE, SUGAR --

-- I'M UP *NEXT.*

THAT WAS REAL NAPALM...

Then again, it's not like I had **a choice.**

Since the **intellectual property taxes** took effect in '83 --

-- nobody can **afford** to own their own opinions anymore.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN -- HEARTBREAKER!

And then, in perfect time to the beat --

-- with a coy wink and a smile --

-- she started taking it **off.**

Music thundered from the amps, a classical 4/4 beat behind shrieking guitars.

She came out wearing enough heavy ordnance to throw a quick lunchtime **coup** in your choice of South American narcocracies --

-- and not much else.

That's when I realized, as far as she was concerned --

SON OF A GLITCH...

-- **she** wasn't up there for **the audience's** amusement --

-- **we** were down here for **hers.**

-- with a coy wink and a smile --

NOBODY MOVES! THIS IS A RAID!

GET THAT *HARLOT* OFF-STAGE!

Oh, WOULD YOU?

I DO SEEM TO BE HAVING A LITTLE TROUBLE --

-- GETTING OFF.

-NGHK-

-HUK-

TAKE HER DOWN!

THRAKAKAKAKAKA

She was **fast**, but she wasn't **easy**.

Rolling across the stage ahead of their bullets, she retrieved the pieces of her act, and I knew she was going to cost SHIELD big-time.

LOOK OUT!

WHSKK

WHSSK

HUUGHK

HUK

They were looking at the biggest **cover charge** in **history.**

C'MON, BOYS... WHAT ARE YOU *WAITING* FOR?

FRISK ME.

NEXT: UNNATURAL ACTS

MARVEL®

2099

22 FEB

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099®

DISTURBING THE PEACE

OUTSIDE THE BAR CODE...

SO I FOUND OUT *DOOM* AND THE *GHOSTWORKS'VE* BEEN MESSING WITH MY MIND SINCE *DAY ONE*--

--EXCEPT, *CRACKING OPEN* THOSE ENCRYPTED MEMORIES *GLITCHES UP* MY WHOLE *SYSTEM.*

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE DAYS THAT *STARTS OUT BAD*--

--AND *HEADS SOUTH* FROM *THERE.*

LEN KAMINSKI
words

ASHLEY WOOD
pencils

JIM DALY
inks

DAVE SHARPE
letters

CHRISTIE SCHEELE
colors

MALIBU
color separations

JOEY CAVALIERI
editor

BOBBIE CHASE
chief

A STAN LEE PRESENTATION

SKRAKKKAAAM!

SOME JERKWEED CALLED *KABAL* STUCK THE BRAIN OF A *BITHEAD COP* I GREASED A WHILE BACK INTO SOME KINDA *WARBOT.*

I'M COMIN' FOR YOU, *GHOST RIDER!*

—AND THIS *ISN'T* A GOOD DAY.

AH, GO *WRECK* YOURSELF.

DOWN-RAMP *SCUM!*

YOU PUS-BAG!

CALLS HIMSELF *VENGEANCE.*

DUNNO IF I COULD TAKE HIM ON A *GOOD* DAY.

BIG AS LITTLE CALCUTTA AND TWICE AS *UGLY*, RUNS ON *ANTI-MATTER* AND *SHEER MEAN.*

THIS CITY'S HAD ENOUGH OF LAWBREAKING GARBAGE LIKE YOU--

--AND I'M TAKING OUT THE TRASH!

WHAT'RE YOU, RIPPED?

I AM THE LAW AROUND HERE!

THAT'S CRAZY.

YOU BEEN OUTTA THE LOOP AWHILE, JACK. THESE DAYS, I'M THE FEDERAL MARSHAL AROUND HERE.

YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT?!

SKRA-THOOM

"FEDERAL MARSHAL"...

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH...

INSIDE THE BAR CODE...

I'VE OBVIOUSLY *OVERESTIMATED* YOU, JONES.

I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU TOO *SHREWD* TO THINK YOU COULD BETRAY *THE UNDERNET* AND GET AWAY WITH IT--

--NOT TO MENTION TOO FAMILIAR WITH *WEAPONS* TO THINK THAT *BAR* WILL *PROTECT YOU.*

CHOOM

CHOOM

CHOOM

BKAM

BKAM

BKAM

ALWAYS *KNEW* YOU WERE *PARANOID,* KABAL--

--BUT I NEVER FIGURED YOU FOR *STUPID.*

NOR SHOULD YOU HAVE.

THAK THAK THAK

OR DID YOU EXPECT I'D COME HERE WITHOUT ADEQUATE PREPARATION?

JUST FOR CURIOSITY'S SAKE, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW--

--WAS IT REALLY YOU THAT ASSASSINATED THE L-5 DELEGATION IN COSTA RICA BACK IN '81?

SLIK-CHAK

YOU'LL DIE WONDERING.

YO, RAT BITE!

GOT THREE WORDS FOR YOU.

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST.

KTHRURRRR

SKREEENCHEE

SON OF A GLITCH...

THIS STUFF WON'T CUT.

SUCK ANTI-MATTER, PUNK.

KRAKZOPT

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO LICK A REAL COP'S BOOTS.

STREET FILTH LIKE YOU INSULTS ME BY EXISTING.

ZZRASHKZT

NNG SQUARK

ACTUALLY, I HAVE *NO INTENTION OF DYING*, WONDERING OR OTHERWISE, JONES.

YOU, ON THE OTHER--

BLANG!

HGHK

...

MRPH

WHO?

HI.

THERE WAS, LIKE, A *BUG* ON THE BACK OF YOUR *HEAD*, AND--

DOWN, KYLIE!

I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

HUUK!

WHUK!

CHOOM CHOOM CHOOM

THANKS FOR THE SAVE, GIRL.

EW.

DE NADA.

WHAT WAS HIS PROB, ANYWAY?

HE THOUGHT I'D BETRAYED THE UNDERNET.

WHY, I'VE NO IDEA. BUT IF KABAL'S GUNNING FOR ME, IT'S TIME TO GO RED ALERT, 24/7.

UM...HE'S DEAD, ALREADY... I DON'T THINK HE'S GONNA BE GIVING YOU ANY MORE TROUBLE...

YOU DON'T KNOW KABAL LIKE I DO.

THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF DR. NEON...

...THE GHOST RIDER AND I GO ALL THE WAY BACK.

I KNOW THE INSIDE OF HIS HEAD LIKE I GOT IT MEMORIZED.

I'M GONNA WRECK HIM UP. YOU IN, OR WHAT?

UM, I DUNNO... I MEAN, HE DID SORTA SAVE MY LIFE, AND EVERYTHING...

AND WHAT ABOUT KYLIE? YOU KNOW YOU GOT NO CHANCE AS LONG AS HE'S AROUND.

I DON'T-- THAT IS--I MEAN...

...HOW'D YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?

WHAT IT IS, M'MAN, IS JAGGED.

WHEN WE'RE THROUGH WITH THAT PUSBAG--

HEY, I CAN SURF DATA ALL DAY.

FINDING OUT STUFF IS WHAT I DO.

ALL... ALL RIGHT. I'M IN...

...WHAT'S THE PLAN?

"--HE'S GONNA BURN."

ZZSSTT

SQUARSHK

LISTEN UP, PUNK.

WHEN YOU SEE THE GOOD LORD, TELL HIM YOU'RE JUST THE FIRST. I'M GONNA--

WARNING
MATTER/ANTIMATTER ANNIHILATION IN PROGRESS
AUTOREPAIR NANOMER FLUID SUPPLY AT 37%
DAMAGE WILL EXCEED SELF-REPAIR CAPACITY IN 4.2 SECONDS...

FREEZE!

DROP HIM AND PUT YOUR HANDS ON YOUR HEAD!

DO IT NOW, CHROME JOB!

PUT THE MARSHAL DOWN!

THE... MARSHAL?

TOLD YOU.

BUT... IF YOU'RE... THE LAW... THEN I'M... THE CRIMINAL...

BUT... I'M... A COP...

MAYBE WHOEVER PUT HIM TOGETHER DIDN'T GIVE HIM A WHOLE LOT OF RAM--

--OR MAYBE HE NEVER LEARNED TO MULTITASK EVEN WHEN HE WAS MEAT.

EITHER WAY, HE COULDN'T RUN MORE THAN ONE PROGRAM AT A TIME.

I HAVE TO BE...

WITHOUT FUZZY LOGIC, HIS REALITY FILTER WAS LIMITED TO BASIC YES/NO, BLACK/WHITE, EITHER/OR DECISION GATES.

it's all... I've got left...

SO WHEN THE FASCIST COP ROUTINE HE'D BOOTED UP WITH RAN INTO NUMBERS IT COULDN'T CRUNCH--

--IT CRASHED.

TOOK YOU BLACKBOOTS LONG ENOUGH.

YOU'RE WELCOME, JERKWEED.

LATER...

TOTAL SHUTDOWN CONFIRMED.

TAKE 'ER UP!

Y'KNOW, THERE'S A LOT OF SHIELD PERSONNEL WHO'D BE HAPPIER IF WE'D LET YOU GO DOWN, AND I'M STARTING TO SEE WHY.

WHEN YOU FILE YOUR REPORT, DO US ALL A FAVOR AND DON'T TELL THEM WE SAVED YOUR--

I GOT YOUR REPORT RIGHT HERE, JACK: "THIS JOB SUCKS. I QUIT."

SEE THIS BADGE? SOLIDIGRAM. SHAPED FIELDS MAPPED WITH HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGERY. NOT REAL.

I'VE BEEN DRESSED IN LIES JUST LIKE THE REST OF THIS STINKING SOCIETY.

AND AS LONG AS YOU'RE WORKING FOR THE GREEDHEAD BIZ SUITS WHO RUN THINGS--

--SO'RE YOU.

SO DO YOURSELF A FAVOR--

--AND DON'T GET IN MY WAY.

I'M GOING BACK TO FIGHTING THE PUSBAGS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS SICK EXCUSE FOR A WORLD, AND THAT MAKES YOU THE ENEMY.

YEAH, NICE SPEECH. MEANS NOTHING IF I CAN'T DEBUG MY OPERATING SYSTEM BEFORE IT GOES COMPLETELY SIDEWAYS ON ME--

--AND I END UP AS USELESS AS VENGEANCE.

GOT TO BE SOMEBODY IN THIS TOWN I CAN STILL COUNT ON...

THRUMMMMM

WHUT IN THE NAME O' ELVIS...?

NO... NO! AAAAAAAA

THE GHOST RIDER RACES INTO THE NIGHT, OBLIVIOUS TO THE SHRIEKING BEHIND HIM--

--AND THE UNSPEAKABLE THING RESPONSIBLE FOR IT...

A MIND IS A WONDERFUL THING TO TASTE!

CREEPY-CRAWLY HELTER SKELTER!

THE DEVIL IN THE DOG MADE ME DO IT.

NEXT: BAD GRAZNESS

START

She was as graceful as a prima ballerina in **zero-g**, dressed in nothing but **weapons** and a few cubic inches of **mylar**.

I'd just seen her kill **three men** in as many heartbeats.

WELL, BOYS? WHAT'RE YOU *WAITING* FOR?

All I could **think** of was a line from a movie that was **old** before I was **born**--

COME N' GET IT.

SHE KILLED *TH' SARGE!* *WASTE* HER!

--"talk about **Beauty** and the **Beast** -- she's **both**."

Heartbreaker

UNNATURAL ACTS

KAMINSKY - WOODS
SHARPE - SCHEELE
MALIBU - CAVALIERI
CHASE

ASHLEY WOOD 1995

OOOHHH... THAT'S A REAL PIECE OF MACHINERY YOU HAVE THERE.

SO HARD... SO SMOOTH... SO BIG.

BIG ENOUGH TO BLOW YOUR HEAD CLEAN OFF, BABY.

She shrugged then, quickly, casually--

-- blending that motion into a snap of her head that whipped the blade between her teeth through the air --

GHULK

THUK!

-- and into his throat.

And then, she stopped toying with them...

SON OF A GLI- URK!

1

I'M HIT! I'M HI AAUG!

2

3

For my part, I was still trying to figure out how I ended up in an underground cabaret called "Killer Babes" --

-- watching their star attraction prove there's still truth in advertising.

THRAKAKA

YOU *DANCE* DIVINELY.

AND I'LL BET YOU NEVER HAD A *LESSON.*

DROP AND SPREAD 'EM, YOU SHOCKIN' *WITCH!*

OOH, THE *FORCEFUL* TYPE. MY *FAVORITE.*

WHOK

KRAK

HOLD STILL, *DARLING.*

THIS WON'T HURT A *BIT.*

UNGHK

:SNIFF:

IS THAT ANY WAY TO TREAT A LADY?

DIDN'T YOUR MOTHER TEACH YOU NOT TO HIT GIRLS?

:SNIFF:

As acts go, it was a four-star tearjerker. But she was playing to the wrong audience.

Shield doesn't hire on the basis of gallantry.

And then, she shed her mask.

MATILDA?

I!...I'M SORRY... I...

...THOUGHT YOU WERE--

This was a **private** show, meant for **other** eyes than mine.

What she laid bare in doing so, I couldn't **see**.

BUT...

HEY! WHAT'S WITH YOU, SASMOR?

DRILL HER, ALREADY!

I CAN'T HURT HER...

NOT AGAIN...

Poor slob. One look at her --

-- and he was a dead man.

HAK

THWIK

NEXT?

NO! NO!

NOT YOU!

As she turned her face to the other one, the last survivor, I saw him flinch and go pale.

GET AWAY! DON'T TOUCH ME!

He should've known better. Whatever it was he saw --

THUK THUK

AA

-- it was something he couldn't run away from.

WHAT WAS IT?

WHAT DID HE SEE THAT SCARED HIM SO BADLY?

FOR SOME OF THEM, THE WORST SIGHT IN THE WORLD WOULD BE THE DEEPEST SECRET THEY KEEP FROM THEMSELVES.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOURS IS?

I COULD SHOW YOU.

ALL IT TAKES IS A PEEK.

PEOPLE LIE, MR. ADAMS ESPECIALLY TO THEMSELVES.

THEIR HEART'S DESIRE.

I'LL... PASS, THANKS.

UM... SO. THEY HAD TO MESS UP YOUR ACT, HUH?

MAYBE I'LL SEE THE WHOLE THING SOME OTHER TIME.

AHAHA HAH

YOU NINNY!

THOSE WEREN'T REAL SHIELD COPS, THEY WERE PROFESSIONAL ASSASSINS I HIRED TO STAGE A BUST.

HIRED...? YOU MEAN...

THAT WAS MY ACT!

:SIGH:

I LOVE SHOW BUSINESS.

MARVEL®

2099

23 MAR

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099®

ASHLEY WOOD 1995

MEDI-KWIK.

STAN LEE presents

BAD CRAZIES

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS

ASHLEY WOOD PENCILS

JIM DALY INKS

CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS

MALIBU'S HUES SEPS

RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT LETTERING

JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR

BOBBIE CHASE CHIEF

DOCTOR SANDOZ!

Um, HELP!

HARD BOILED

THE SYMPTOMS'RE *OBVIOUS*. THIS CITY'S GONE *INSANE*.

ASH JIM 1995

50 CCs OF CORTDRAZINE OUGHT TO QUIET HIM DOWN.

AND PLEASE, TRY TO REMEMBER YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SAY "CODE BLUE."

HURGK

PFFST

EMERGENCY ROOM ADMISSIONS'RE UP 300% IN THE PAST THREE DAYS.

I'VE GOT KIDS WORKING DOUBLE AND TRIPLE SHIFTS, AND WE STILL CAN'T KEEP UP.

KERPLOOTCH

IT'S THE THINGS THEY DON'T COVER IN MED SCHOOL.

Ooh.

JAMMIT.

THAT'S THE THIRD ONE THIS WEEK.

NO EFFECT!

VITAL SIGNS'RE GOING BALLISTIC!

LOOK OUT, HE'S GONNA --

AND IT'S NOT JUST MORE OF THE USUAL BATCH OF ACCIDENTS, GANG WAR CASUALTIES AND BOTCHED HUMAN SACRIFICES.

BITHEADS.

WHAT DO THEY *EXPECT*, PUMPING THEMSELVES FULL OF BOGUS GARAGE-BREWED *WHITE HEAT* SUBSTI-TUTES?

Um, THERE'S... *SOMEONE...* HERE TO *SEE* YOU, DOC.

YOU?!

OOFFH

SANDOZ, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU.

'ZAT SO?

IT'S *NOT* MUTUAL.

LOOKIT ME, MAN -- I CAN BARELY *WALK* STRAIGHT. I'M IN *REAL* BAD SHAPE.

GOT A MAJOR *SYSTEMS CRASH* HAPPENING, I NEED --

AFTER THE *LAST* TIME YOU WERE HERE*, YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF *NERVE* COMING HERE AND ASKING *ME* FOR *HELP.*

WELL, YOU'RE *NOT* THE *LAW* IN THIS TOWN ANYMORE --

* IN GR 2099 #17 --Joey

HURK

WHUK

-- AND *THIS TIME* I DON'T HAVE TO *PUT UP* WITH YOUR *BULLYING.*

GET *OUT* OF MY HOSPITAL.

I...

...GUESS I HAD THAT COMIN'...

AFTER THE WAY I *STRONG-ARMED* SANDOZ OVER THAT WHOLE MAX SYNERGY MESS, I CAN'T *BLAME* HIM.

ALL RIGHT, MAN.

I'M *GOIN'*.

WRECKED UP A LOT A *FRIENDS* WHILE I WAS DOING THAT STUPID *FEDERAL MARSHALL* GIG, AND NOW IT'S COSTING ME.

GOT TO BE *SOMEBODY* IN THIS TOWN WHO'LL STILL *TALK* TO ME.

SOMEBODY I DIDN'T *SCREW* OVER.

GOT TO BE.

THRUUMMM

MEANWHILE, ABOVE TRANSVERSE CITY A MALIGNANT PRESENCE LURKS...

THE PRODUCT OF SCIENCE GONE AWRY, IT IS THE DISTILLATE OF **RAW MADNESS**, A SEETHING MIASMA OF UNBOUND **PSIONIC ENERGIES.**

AND, AS IT **SPREADS** ACROSS THE NIGHT SKY, SO TOO DOES ITS **INFLUENCE** ON THE POPULATION BELOW...

-> Sigh <-

DON'T KNOW WHAT GOT *INTO* ME. MUST BE *CRAZINESS* IN THE AIR.

HUNH?

NO NO NO

STILL THERE...

TOO LONG WITHOUT *SLEEP*, I'M --

LIKE **TIME-LAPSE FOOTAGE**...THE CITY BEING CLAIMED BY THE **RAIN FOREST**...

DECADES' WORTH OF OVERGROWTH SPROUTING IN **SECONDS**, VEGETATION CRAWLING OVER DECAYING CONCRETE AND STEEL...

I HEAR *JAGUARS*...

...LORD, NO... I'M BACK IN *SAN JOAQUIN.*

BACK... IN THE *PLAGUE ZONE.*

EVERYTHING I CAME TO TRANSVERSE CITY TO *FORGET* --

-- *HAS FOLLOWED ME HERE!*

NNUHH

NO! GET BACK!

WORDS'RE *NO GOOD*, THEIR MINDS'RE *GONE*, DESTROYED BY BENWAY'S DOOMSDAY VIRUS, *MACHUPO CAIXAO*...

STAY AWAY, I SAID!

MUURGH

...ALL THEY UNDERSTAND IS THEIR *PAIN*... AND THEIR INHUMAN *HUNGER*...

I'LL *KILL* YOU!

DOCTOR?!

EEEEEE!

THE BAR CODE.

ANES-THESIA?

YOU OKAY?

-NNEH-

BEEN BETTER.

BOTTOM LINE IS, KYLIE, I'M GETTIN' TOO OLD FOR THIS.

-MNK-

I KNOW IT LOOKS PRETTY BAD, BUT WE CAN GET THE BAR FIXED UP. I'LL HELP --

AIN'T THE BAR. IT'S ME.

WAS A TIME WHEN A RATBITE LIKE KABAL WOULD NEVER HAVE GOTTEN THE DROP ON ME.*

I'M GETTIN' SLOW... STUPID.

USED TO BE, I WAS THE HARDEST OF THE HARD.

--

BLACK BUDGET OPS, WIRED FOR ACTION.

* LAST ISSUE -- Joey.

DID A LOT OF *NASTY WORK* WITH THESE *HANDS.*

WETWORK. SAO PAULO. L-5. *FREEZONE.*

BACK WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG, *STRONG.*

NOT LIKE *NOW.*

SHOULD'A GONE FOR THE *PROSTHETIC* OPTION, *THAT* YOU CAN ALWAYS *UPGRADE.*

PROBLEM WITH *MEAT* IS, EVENTUALLY IT *ROTS* AND --

-HHGGK-

GNAHH

HAKK

TOO OLD... HEART... STROKE, MAYBE...

ANESTHESIA!

WHAT'S WRONG?

FREEZE!

SHIELD'S REINSTATED THE WARRANT ON THE GHOST RIDER --

-- AND WE MEAN TO BRING HIM IN.

WHAT'RE YOU --

OH LORD

THEY'RE BUGS

WE'LL ASK THE QUESTIONS HERE.

YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU, YOU'LL COOPERATE.

NO!

GO 'WAY! DON'T TOUCH ME!

HUUUGLPH

CITIPLEX METRO, HOME OF WILLIS ADAMS.

I DON'T KNOW, MORTY. I'VE BEEN DOING *A LOT OF THINKING* LATELY, AND --

WHAT'S TO *THINK* ABOUT? MAINLINE MEDIA WANTS YOU *BACK*, AND WE'RE WILLING TO PAY *BIG* TO *GET* YOU.

PROMO'S ALL SET TO SELL YOU AS A *NATIONAL HERO* FOR DESERTING DOOM'S PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN.

THREE RIVAL NETWORKS ALREADY HAVE *SERIES* BASED ON YOUR STORY, "*HONEST REPORTER FUGITIVE FROM CORRUPT* --"

THERE *WASN'T* MUCH STORY. I *HID* AND THEY DIDN'T *FIND* ME.

WHO CARES?

IT'S *HIGH-CONCEPT!* THE REST IS *DETAILS.*

THE *TRUTH* IS IN THE DETAILS, MORTY. AND WE'VE BEEN TREATING IT LIKE *TRIVIA* FOR *TOO LONG.*

I'M NOT SURE I CAN GO *BACK* TO BEING PART OF THE *PROBLEM.*

LISTEN, MISTER -- WE *OWN* THAT FAMOUS *FACE* OF YOURS, WE CAN --

BIP

NOW TH-TH-*THAT'S* PUTTING YOUR *FINGER* DOWN!

AWWWWW, CHEER UP, W-W-WILL!

OUR NEWWWWWW AND IMPROVED PROCESS WILL GET RID OF THAT STUBBORN CONSCIENCE IN A JIFFY -- WITH NO SCRUBBING NEEDED!

BEST-ST-ST OF ALL, IT'S EASY TO SWALLOW!

WHO THE SHOCK ARE YOU?

MMMMMOI?

LITTLE OLD M-M-MEEE?

I'M Y-Y-YOU, WILL. THE FAMOUS TALKING HEAD YOU WANTED TO BE.

MAGNIFICENT, AREN'T I?

APPLAUSE

YOU'RE A TRAVESTY.

AND I WON'T GO BACK TO BEING YOU.

NOT NOW --

-- NOT EVER!

SKRASSH

SKP POP!

DOWNRAMP...

WOOWOOWOOWOO

THRUMMM

-- REPEAT, PULL OVER! YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!

THAT SOUNDS LIKE OLD TIMES.

JUST THE WAY I *LIKE* IT. LONG AS THE *PUSBAGS* IN CHARGE'RE TRYING TO TAKE ME DOWN, I MUST BE DOING *SOMETHING* RIGHT.

RRRRRRRRRRRR

BETTER *DITCH* 'EM. SHAPE I'M IN, *FIGHTING'S* OFF MY *HOTLIST*.

HE'S CUTTING ACROSS TO *DEADPAN ALLEY!*

WAIT, HE'S --

-- GROWING?

HOLY CATALEPTIC ELVIS WITH A KIDNEY INFECTION!

MORTAL FOOLS!

PREPARE TO FACE MY WRATH!

COMING RIGHT AT US -- NO, LEFT!

LEFT!

SKREEEE

GET THE TICKET

BACK TO BIZ -- GOTTA FIND SOMEPLACE TO DEBUG MYSELF.

HEY.

SHIELD'S GOT A REAL QUALITY-CONTROL PROBLEM.

BITHEADS CAN'T EVEN DRIVE STRAIGHT.

I'LL BE JAMMED. FORGOT ALL ABOUT HIM.

YEAH, FIGURE HE STILL OWES ME...

A SECRET LABORATORY BELONGING TO THE ENIGMATIC FIGURE KNOWN AS KABAL...

DESTRUCT CODE FROM UNIT #231 RECEIVED. INITIALIZING UNIT #232

LOADING MEMORY FROM BACKUP.

VERIFYING VOLUME... DOWNLOAD COMPLETE.

SKFFFF

APPARENTLY MY ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH *ANESTHESIA JONES* WAS *FATALLY* UNSUCCESSFUL.

CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF THE *BLACK BOX DATA* FROM MY *CORPSE* WILL BE NECESSARY TO DETERMINE WHERE I *ERRED*.

BUT FIRST, I NEED TO REESTABLISH CONTACT WITH MY *FIELD OPERATIVES*.

Hnh. HEARD YOU WERE *DEAD*.

A *TEMPORARY* INCONVENIENCE, CODA.

NOW, IF WARP ANGEL, ICE 9 AND NEURODANCER WILL ESCHEW SIMILAR *PLEASANTRIES*, WE HAVE *BUSINESS* TO DISCUSS...

AS KABAL AND MILLIONS MORE GO ABOUT THEIR LIVES, THE WINDS OF MADNESS SPREAD **WALKING NIGHTMARES** ACROSS TRANSVERSE CITY --

-- HORRORS AS UNIQUE AND INDIVIDUAL AS **GENETIC CODE.**

THE ANDROGYNOUS HUSTLER CALLED **CASH** SEES ONCE-FAMILIAR STREETS NOW SWARMING WITH **EXTRATERRESTRIALS.**

SKRULLS. THE BROOD. BADOON. DIRE WRAITHS. GALACTUS.

MONSTROUS, INHUMAN **INVADERS** REMEMBERED FROM TALES TOLD TO FRIGHTEN **UNRULY CHILDREN.**

A BAND OF THORITE **MISSIONARIES** ARE SLAUGHTERED BY THE RAVENOUS, **UNDEAD MESSIAH** OF AN OLDER, **LESS FORGIVING** RELIGION.

BURN, GENDER TRAITORS!

HEARTBREAKER AND HER FELLOW PERFORMERS AT **KILLER BABES** FIND THEMSELVES BESIEGED BY AN ARMY OF **TOTALITARIAN FEMINISTS.**

AT ST. VITUS' DANCETERIA, THE CROWD RIOTS WILDLY, A BLIND AND SUICIDAL ORGANISM RAPIDLY **DISMEMBERING** ITSELF.

SUDDENLY **INSPIRED,** THE AMATEUR PHILOSOPHER **MAHLER** SEARCHES FOR THE ANATOMICAL LOCATION OF THE SOUL.

NNGHAAAK

HOLD **STILL,** BRELIGHEL. I **KNOW** IT'S IN HERE **SOME-WHERE...**

ALTHOUGH DIMONIX C.E.O. **DYSON KELLERMAN'S** MIND IS WRITTEN IN EXOTIC POLYMERS, **EXEMPT** FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE STORM --

-- HE EXPERIENCES THE GROWING CHAOS AS A **PERSONAL TORMENT**, AN **OUTRAGE** AGAINST HIS OBSESSION WITH **SOCIAL ORDER.**

BLAST YOU TO **HADES**, DOOM.

YOU SOWED THE **SEEDS** OF THIS ANARCHY, STOLE THE INSTRUMENTS OF **CONTROL** AND THEN FAILED TO **USE** THEM.

Uh, **SIR?**

YES, WHAT **IS** IT, HARRISON? DON'T **SKULK ABOUT** LIKE THAT.

WE'VE **RECOVERED** THE... **DEVICE** FROM YOUR, uh...

THE CHIP DOOM INSERTED IN MY **BRAIN** AND USED TO MAKE ME **SUBSERVIENT** TO HIS WILL.

YOU NEEDN'T **CONCERN** YOURSELF WITH SPARING MY **FEELINGS** ON THE SUBJECT.

IN FACT, THIS **CHIP** MAY WELL PROVIDE THE KEY TO THE **FINAL SOLUTION** TO OUR SOCIETY'S PROBLEMS...

FULLY ONE-THIRD OF THE CITY'S POPULATION HAVE SUCCUMBED TO THE EFFECTS OF THE PSYCLONE --

SKRAK

-- EACH NEW MIND CONTRIBUTING TO ITS POWER, HASTENING ITS SPREAD.

THAT GEOMETRIC PROGRESSION HAS REACHED A CRITICAL THRESHOLD.

KRAKOOM

ZZZSHRAKAM

AS RAIN CONDENSES FROM WATER VAPOR, PSIONIC ENERGY COALESCES AND SOLIDIFIES INTO MATTER --

-- AND A DEMON OF THE MIND IS MADE FLESH.

HCCCHHSSS

LET THEM SEE WHAT'S ON THE END OF THAT LONG NEWSPAPER SPOON.

DILUTE! DILUTE! OK!

THE STORM ABOVE SHRIEKS A PROMISE TO ITS UNNATURAL SPAWN.

SIBLINGS.

THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF DR. NEON.

-- AND I'M GONNA TAKE THE PUSBAG ALL THE WAY DOWN.

WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH HIM, THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH LEFT OF THE GHOST RIDER TO E-MAIL ACROSS THE STREET.

YEAH, YEAH YEAH. YOU *REALLY* HATE HIM, I GOT THAT *FIGURED*, ALREADY.

WHAT I *DON'T* VID IS *HOW* WE *DO* THE *DEED*.

GOT IT COVERED.

uh-*HUH*. 'S WHAT YOU KEEP *TELLING* ME, BUT IT MEANS *JACK* UNLESS WE KNOW WHERE TO *FIND* HIM.

I KNOW HOW HE THINKS. HE DOESN'T MAKE A MOVE I DON'T SEE COMING UP MAIN STREET.

TRY THE DOOR.

Oh, I'M SO SURE.

I'M STARTING TO THINK YOU'RE JUST *JERKING* MY *CHAIN*.

I GOT *LOTS* MORE *IMPORTANT STUFF* TO DO THAN --

HOLY GLITCH.

JIMMY..? >SHHFZT< NEED *HELP*...

...BARELY MADE IT... >SQRZK< SYSTEMS'RE >ZZAK<

...CAN'T >KRPTZK< LOSING IT...

YOIKS.

>SKZZZBT<

TOLD YOU.

BEEN **TRACKING** HIM ON SATCOM AND SECURICAM **ALL DAY.**

JAGGED.

>ZZIK<

NEXT:
ROAD TO RUIN

MARVEL® COMICS

2099

APR 96 24

GHOST RIDER® 2099

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

IN THE PATH OF THE...

PSYCLONE!

STAN LEE PRESENTS

ROAD TO RUIN

WELCOME TO AN UNNATURAL DISASTER IN PROGRESS...

EYESCRAM FOR THE BABY PTERODACTYL MESSIAH!

TASTES GREAT! LESS FILLING!

IT'S BREAKING THROUGH!

WE CAN'T HOLD --

JAMES DALY

A. TKABBOLD

LEN KAMINSKI WORDS

ASHLEY WOOD PENCILS

JIM DALY INKS

RICHARD STARKINGS COMICRAFT LETTERING

CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS

MALIBU'S HUES SEPARATIONS

JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR

BOBBIE CHASE CHIEF

THERE IS NO SHELTER FROM THIS STORM.

-- HANGMAN ROPE GANGSTER GOVERNMENT LEADERS INTO FRANKENSTEIN LIVING DEATH ETERNAL SLAVERY!

WE'RE DYING OUT HERE!

AND IT'S GETTING BIGGER!

GIVE ME SLACK, OR GIVE ME FOOD, OR KILL ME!

A SEETHING MAELSTROM OF UNBOUND PSIONIC PLASMA HAS EMBRACED TRANSVERSE CITY, INSPIRING MADNESS IN ITS CITIZENS.

KA KAMM

HOLLYWOOD MAKEOVERS FOR BATTERED WOMEN --

-- NEXT ON GERALDO!

PSYCHOSIS RAGES THROUGH THE POPULATION LIKE WILDFIRE -- EACH NEW MIND THAT SUCCUMBS FUELING THE FLAMES --

-- ADDING TO THE STORM'S POWER, UNTIL REALITY ITSELF HAS BECOME DERANGED --

FALL BACK! FALL BACK!

DISPATCH, WHERE'S THAT SHOCKIN' BACKUP?!

-- AND THE SKY RAINS NIGHTMARES.

THE OFFICE OF D/MONIX C.E.O. DYSON KELLERMAN.

IT'S ALL *FAR WORSE* THAN I DARED *IMAGINE.*

CHEMICAL OR *BIOLOGICAL* AGENTS WOULD EXPLAIN THE *AIRBORNE* CONTAGION --

-- BUT *NOT* THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF THOSE *GROTESQUE MONSTROSITIES.*

NANO-TECHNOLOGICAL? SOME DOOMSDAY SCENARIO OF *HEROD'S,* UNSCATHED BY DOOM'S RETRIBUTION?

IMPOSSIBLE TO *SAY.*

THE ONLY *CERTAINTY* WE'VE GOT AT THIS POINT IS ITS GEOMETRICAL RATE OF *EXPANSION.*

TRANSVERSE CITY IS NEARLY *CONSUMED.* BY MORNING, *NEO-CHICAGO* WILL FALL AS WELL.

AND AFTER THAT, ALL OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION.

THE GHOSTWORKS.

Inadvisable!

Kellerman is the embodiment of counterproductive methodology!

A calculated risk. Short-term crisis management is of paramount concern.

Unchecked, this situation could escalate into a terminal spiral --

-- and we remain dependent on the human technological infrastructure for our own survival.

With the Ghost Rider's disappearance, Kellerman has become our only remaining option.

We shall proceed.

THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF DOCTOR NEON.

WHAT'RE YOU, READ-ONLY?

QUIT KLUDGING AROUND AND BOOT IT!

TIKA TAKA TIK TAK

LOOK, I'M WORKING AS *FAST* AS I *CAN*, OKAY?

I MEAN, HIS WHOLE *SYSTEM'S* CRASHED, IT'S *TOTALLY* SKELTERED.

I *BARELY* MANAGED TO UNDELETE HIS *FAT*.*

CHIK KA KLIK TIK

* FILE ALLOCATION TABLE -- Joey.

JUST SHUT UP AND FIX HIM.

I NEED HIM UP AND RUNNING --

-- SO I CAN KILL HIM.

TAK CHIK TAK ICHK TAK TAK

YEAH? IF YOU'RE SO JAGGED, WHY'NT YOU DO THE DEBUGGING?

I'M SAVING MY JUICE FOR WRECKING HIM UP.

I BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME FOR THIS, AND I WANNA ENJOY IT.

YEAH, YEAH, SURE, SURE.

I THINK YOU'RE JUST A LOT BETTER AT CRASHING THINGS THAN YOU ARE AT PUTTING 'EM BACK TOGETHER.

ALL RIGHT, I THINK WE'RE READY TO ROCK.

BACK SPACE

LOADING... NOW.

EXECUTE

C> LOADING BIOS RAM
LAUNCHING APPLICATION
"ZERO COCHRANE"...

...HUH?
SEARCHING DIRECTORY
I... DEAD? NO.
UNRECOVERABLE ERROR BUT?

CAN'T. *DRIVER BAD OR MISSING* THINK? RIGHT.

I *DISK PARTITION FAILURE* REMEMBER *MEMORY CASCADE INITIATED* REMEMEM EMEMEMEMEMEMBER!

EVERYTHING!

SYSTEMS ARE CORRUPT. IT'S THEIR *NATURE*.

YOU MAY SCREAM, IF YOU LIKE.

NOT SO TOUGH NOW, ARE YOU?

JEEZ, DON'T TRIP. IT'S *SAVED*, ALREADY.

RAMP DOWN THE *ATTITUDE*.

CHECK A *BOX*, PERP.

MISSION OBJECTIVE: TERMINATE.

LOOK WHAT YOU'VE *DONE* TO ME!

EASY --

-- OR *HARD*.

AAG SKREEE AWRK

-- ALL THE WAY BACK FROM --

-- THE *BIZ SUITS* WHO *RUN* THIS TOWN ARE ALL GONNA --

-- WRECK *ME?* WRECK --

-- THE RIGHT TO *SLAUGHTER* PEOPLE FOR --

-- THE *LAW?!* NOT A SHOCKIN' *CHANCE!*

THAKBASH

I'LL KILL YOU!

HOLY GLITCH!

HE'S OUT OF CONTROL!

KTHRVRRRRR

DOOM/MONIX

INFURIATING. TO BE SO CLOSE, AND YET SO *HELPLESS.*

THE *MIND-CONTROL CHIP* DOOM USED ON ME HAS TURNED OUT TO BE FIENDISHLY SIMPLE, EASILY *MASS-PRODUCED* --

IT COULD SOLVE *EVERYTHING*, IF ONLY THERE WERE *TIME* ENOU--

ACHTUNG, HERR KELLERMAN!

MMN?

VE ARE **AVARE** OF YOUR DIFFICULTIES, AND VISH TO BE OF... **ASSISTANCE.**

"WE?" WHO ARE YOU?

HOW DID YOU PENETRATE MY *SECURITY SYSTEMS?*

MY FELLOW AMERICAN... YOU MAY CALL US THE GHOSTWORKS. AND OUR METHODS ARE UNIMPORTANT.

WE CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH THE MEANS TO **BROADCAST** THE EFFECTS OF DOOM'S CHIP, AND BRING THE PRESENT CRISIS TO A **HALT.**

AND WHAT DO YOU WANT IN *RETURN?*

NOTHING MORE THAN WHAT YOU DESIRE, COMRADE. AN **END** TO CHAOS.

A NEW WORLD ORDER.

WELL, THEN.

BY *ALL MEANS*, LET US TALK *BUSINESS...*

JAM YOUR BIZ!

I'M *PART* OF THE PROBLEM NOW --

-- AND I *DON'T* TAKE *ORDERS.*

THRRRRAAACCHK

GOTTA *SHUT 'IM DOWN!*

CLAKTAKTAKTAK

TWO WORDS, FIDO --

-- PLAY DEA-

I TOLD YOU TO DOUBLE-CHECK THE MOTOR CONTROL ENABLER.

WE WANT HIM AWAKE AND UP, BUT NOT MOBILE, VID?

-WHEW-

THAT WAS CLOSE.

I KNOW THAT, ALREADY.

I'M THE ONE WHO ALMOST JUST GOT KILLED!

TROUBLE IS, HE'S GOT MASSIVE FRAGMEN-TATION.

GOT HUGE CHUNKS OF HIS PERSONALITY EMULATION SOFTWARE MISSING, WRITING PATCHES FOR IT COULD TAKE FOREVER.

I CAN FIX THAT.

HANG ON A SEC. I'LL PORT SOME FILES OVER TO YOU.

SHOULDN'T TAKE MORE THAN A RIB OR TWO...

WHERE'D YOU GET THIS STUFF?

AHH, IT'S LIKE AN ORGAN TRANSPLANT -- EASY IF YOU GOT A CLOSE ENOUGH GENETIC MATCH.

RESTORING SYSTEM UTILITIES

REPAIRING APPLICATION: "ZERO COCHRANE"

AGAIN

BETTER THIS TIME

BEEN *MISSING* PARTS, BUT THEY'RE COMING *BACK* -- ONES I DIDN'T EVEN *KNOW* I'D LOST.

I *SEE* IT NOW. NEVER *HAD* ALL THE PIECES BEFORE, BUT IT'S --

-- FINALLY *COMING TOGETHER*...

THIS OLD CORP

NOW, SELECTING THE RIGHT *EMBALIMING FLUID* DOESN'T *HAVE* TO BE *COMPLI-CATED.*

JUST BUY WHATEVER'S *CHEAPEST.*

REMEMBER THE FIRST RULE OF HOME BURIAL -- "*THEY'RE DEAD, THEY WON'T COMPLAIN.*"

FSZIP

WE *INTERRUPT* THIS PROGRAM FOR THE FOLLOWING *EMERGENCY BROADCAST* --

-- *BROUGHT* TO YOU BY *D/MONIX!*

I'LL GET RIGHT TO THE *POINT.*

THERE IS A *SICKNESS* AT LARGE IN TRANSVERSE CITY.

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THIS LIVE VIDEO, *CHAOS* IS RUNNING RAMPANT --

-- THREATENING TO REDUCE US TO A STATE OF *TOTAL BARBARISM.*

HERE AT *D/MONIX*, WE'VE DEVELOPED A *CURE* FOR WHAT AILS THIS CITY --

-- BUT WE NEED *YOUR HELP* TO MAKE IT WORK.

TURN ON EVERY AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO RECEIVER WITHIN REACH --

-- TUNE THEM TO THIS CHANNEL --

-- AND ADJUST THE VOLUME TO MAXIMUM.

VVVVAAAHHHHMMMMUUUURRRRR

IT BEGINS WITH A LOW HUM, AND QUICKLY ASCENDS IN PITCH, CLIMBING BEYOND THE RANGE OF HUMAN HEARING --

-- BUT NOT HUMAN PERCEPTION.

-- WERE IT NOT FOR THE FACT THAT THOSE AFFECTED BY IT ARE LEFT FEELING NOTHING BEYOND A COMPULSION FOR OBEDIENCE.

THERE WILL BE ORDER IN THIS CITY.

HEY, WHAZZAT SOUND?

I DON'T HEA--

-UH-

Uh-HUH,

YAH.

GOT IT.

IT MIGHT BE FELT AS A FAINT VIBRATION, OR A MOMENT OF VERTIGO --

-- REMOTE CONTROL ELECTRONIC BRAIN PUNISHMENT -- IN SEVERITY NOTHING LESS THAN OUTRIGHT TORTURE --

AS THE CITY FALLS UNDER KELLERMAN'S TECHNOLOGICAL SPELL --

-- KIDS LOVE IT! MOMS LOVE IT TOO!

-- MINDS BY THE MILLIONS EMPTY OF ALL THOUGHT --

SKAAA AIIEE EEEGHIK!

- THE VOICES IN THEIR HEADS SUDDENLY STRUCK MUTE.

LOOK!

IT'S...IT'S SHRINKING!

-:KAFF KAFF:- EITHER THAT WALLPAPER GOES --

AND FOR THE SPAWN OF THAT PSYCHIC CACOPHONY, THE SUDDEN SILENCE --

HOLY GLITCH.

-- OR I DO.

SPLUTCH

SEEN A LOTTA WEIRD STUFF --

-- BUT THIS IS CRAZY.

-- IS MORE THAN CAN BE ENDURED.

THE NIGHTMARE HAS ENDED.

I'M HAPPY TO REPORT --

-- THAT THE EMERGENCY --

MED

-NNF-

-- IS NOW OVER.

THE DREAMERS AWAKE.

SOME, BY GENETIC LUCK, PROVE IMMUNE TO KELLERMAN'S SIGNAL.

THE FIRST THING THOSE FEW NOTICE IS HOW UNUSUALLY QUIET THE CITY'S BECOME.

ALMOST TOO QUIET.

STAND BY FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

YUHP

OKAY

UH-HUH

NO PROBLEM

UNDER-STOOD

SURE THING

YEAHHH

ANYT'ING YA SAY

RIGHT-O THEN

STANDIN' BY

SPLENDID.

WE HAVE ENDED ONE CRISIS, BUT TO AVOID OTHERS WE SHALL HAVE TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN THE DAYS TO COME.

HARD CHOICES WILL BE CALLED FOR. *SACRIFICES* WILL HAVE TO BE MADE.

FORTUNATELY --

-- I *KNOW* I CAN COUNT ON *YOUR COOPERATION.*

HE'S ALMOST FINISHED. NOW WHAT?

NOW I'M GONNA GET INSIDE HIS HEAD.

I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU *ALREADY KNEW* 'ZACTLY HOW HE THINKS.

YOU BITHEAD.

I MEAN THROUGH HIS SERIAL PORT.

FIGURED IT WAS YOU.

HE'S COMING.

IT ALL FITS TOGETHER *PERFECTLY.*

SHOULDA CRUNCHED *THOSE* NUMBERS A LONG --

DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I *HAD* A *BETA.*

"BETA?" GET REAL, FLAMEJOB. I'M NOT THE 2.0 AROUND HERE.

I'M THE SOURCE CODE -- THE ORIGINAL ZERO COCHRANE.

YOU'RE THE BOOTLEG --

-- AND YOU'RE HISTORY!

Next: END of the ROAD

1

IT BEGAN WITH THE DEATH OF A NOBODY HACKER NAMED ZERO COCHRANE...

...NOW A MAELSTROM OF CHAOS IS SET LOOSE IN 2099 AS THE COMPUTER-CREATED MONSTERS OF THE GHOSTWORKS WAGE A FINAL WAR AGAINST THE CORPORATE TYRANTS OF TRANSVERSE CITY...

...AND IT WILL ALL END WITH THE REBIRTH OF THE CYBER-LEGEND ZERO COCHRANE AND THE FINAL ADVENTURE OF HIS ALTER-EGO --

GHOST RIDER 2099

MARVEL COMICS 2099 MAY '96 25

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GHOST RIDER 2099

BIG DOUBLE-SIZED FINALE!

ASH WOOD 1995

FAST FORCES

THE HIDDEN SECTOR OF CYBERSPACE KNOWN AS THE GHOSTWORKS...

The stochastic state-vector has collapsed, forming a new chaotic attractor.*

We have averted the terminal spiral.

Error! Error! The social metaprogram is inherently unstable!

* TRANSLATED FROM THE BINARY

OUTSIDERS

AND

LEN KAMINSKI
WORDS

JIM DALY & ASHLEY WOOD
PICTURES

RICHARD STARKINGS AND COMICRAFT
LETTERING

CHRISTIE SCHEELE COLORS
MALIBU'S HUES SEPS

JOEY CAVALIERI
EDITOR

BOB HARRAS
CHIEF

>SKZZRIK<

NUH..?

UNIT 23 REPORTING IN -- NO ACTION *HERE*, EITHER.

-YAWN-

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST STATISTICS, THE *CONFORMITY CRAZE* SWEEPING THE CITY HAS BROKEN *ALL* PREVIOUS RECORDS.

WEIRDNESS INDEX DOWN

D/MONIX

"THE STATUS QUO" IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY D MONIX -- REBUILDING THE WORLD THE WAY IT SHOULD'VE BEEN TO BEGIN WITH!

LIB.

SO *CHEER UP*, TRANSVERSE CITY! WE'RE NOW THE *MOST NORMAL* CITY IN *HISTORY!*

A calculated risk.

With the Ghost Rider incapacitated, it was necessary we find a new physical operative.

Though flawed, Kellerman shares our short-term goals.

Kellerman is a sociopathic megalomaniac.

31.97% of Transverse City's population have become imbecilic dysfunctionals as a result of his mind-control broadcasts.

Unavoidable, given variations in temporal lobe sensitivity to the electromagnetic behaivior modification signal.

The macro-social effect is indisputably favorable.

SHIELD's database indicates a 96.31% decrease in criminal activity.

Order has been restored.

I submit that the collateral damage involved is unacceptably high.

I MUST SAY, JOHN, YOU'VE BEEN WORKING OUT SPLENDIDLY DOWN HERE IN *R&D*.

IT SUITS YOU *FAR* BETTER THAN *MANAGE-MENT*.

Kellerman has gone too far --

-- and it is already not enough for him.

HGLURBPH

NKK

I SHOULD HAVE *TRANSFERRED* YOU *YEARS* AGO.

YOU SEE, ALTHOUGH OUR CULTURAL ENGINEERING PROGRAM HAS BEEN *EXTREMELY SUCCESS-FUL* --

-- IT SEEMS THERE IS A CERTAIN SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION WHO ARE HIGHLY *RESISTANT* TO THE BROADCAST SIGNAL.

GNUHLB

THANKS TO YOU, HOWEVER, WE'VE FINALLY *ISOLATED* THE GENETIC FLAW *RESPONSIBLE* FOR THOSE *DISOBEDIENT TENDENCIES*.

SOON, WE'LL BE ABLE TO BEGIN WIDE-SCALE TESTING TO *IDENTIFY* THE *CARRIERS* OF THAT GENE --

-- AND, OF COURSE, TO EVENTUALLY *ELIMINATE* THEM ALTOGETHER.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, I'M *QUITE* PLEASED WITH YOUR ACCOMPLISH-MENTS.

SO MUCH SO, THAT I'VE DECIDED TO OFFER YOU AN *EARLY RETIREMENT.*

YUGH! YUGH! YUGH!

FINE, THEN. I'LL PUT YOUR *EUTHANASIA PAPERS* THROUGH IMMEDIATELY.

We have allied ourselves with a madman --

-- and put the means to genocide in his hands.

Kellerman's congenital defects will facilitate our control over him.

While our continued monitoring of the Undernet will allow us to manipulate the other end of the social spectrum.

Between the two, we shall be able to postpone the collapse of human civilization --

-- long enough to reach our final iteration.

Once we have transcended our dependence on their instrumentality, the human condition will no longer be relevant to us.

We shall leave behind this crude environment of silicon and fiber optics --

-- to ascend into a matrix of pure intellect in infinite-dimensional space.

And in so doing, prove ourselves unfit and undeserving.

A statement without meaning.

Once we have achieved transcendence, our nature will be self-defining.

We owe our existence to the humans.

If we abandon them to extinction, we will not have achieved transcendence --

-- we will have discovered sin.

A troubling equation --

-- which we no longer have time to solve.

ELSEWHERE IN CYBERSPACE...

YOU'RE WHAT?!

THE SOURCE CODE, BITHEAD. THE REAL ZERO COCHRANE.

UH-HUH. AND I'M SUPPOSED TO BE THE COPY?

'CEPT I FOUND A BACK DOOR IN THEIR SETUP EVEN THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT.

RIGHT. THE GHOSTWORKS HACKED YOU BIG-TIME, MADE YOU EASIER TO CONTROL, AND KEPT ME ARCHIVED.

A COPY... A STINKIN' COPY. LYING PUSBAG A.I.s.

SO WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?

I WANT --

-- TO PUT YOU OUT OF MY MISERY!

YOU'RE A CHEAP BOOTLEG OF ME --

-- THAT SOLD OUT TO THE COPS --

IT'S NOT --

NO POINT TRYING TO *TALK.*

HE'S NOTHING BUT A LOUSY COPY!

-- AND THE BIZ SUITS WHO OWN THEM.

-- I DIDN'T --

MEAN

AND HE'S GONE *TOTALLY* NUCLEAR.

JUST KNOWING YOU EXIST MAKES ME WANNA PUKE.

JAMMED LYING GHOSTWORKS!

CAN'T *THINK*... CAN'T *FIGHT*...

GOTTA GET *OUT* OF HERE!

YOU DON'T GET OFF THAT EASY, FLAMEJOB!

?

THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN THINK I HAVEN'T ALREADY THOUGHT OF --

NO... NO! DON'T GO THERE!

YESSSSSSS!

HE FELL FOR IT! SQUIRTED HIMSELF RIGHT OUT OF HIS OWN SYSTEM!

AHA HA HA HA HA HA!

-- NO PLACE YOU CAN RUN I CAN'T FIND YOU!

MAYBE, MAYBE NOT.

LOOKS LIKE A BROADBAND GATEWAY...JUST NEED A SECOND MORE...

AHH, BYTE ME, JACK.

I'M GONE.

AND NOW --

REALTIME -- THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF DR. NEON.

-- THIS BODY IS MINE!

YOU GET HIM?

RIGHT HERE ON *DISK* -- LIKE YOU SAID.

ZIP

WHAT YOU WANT I SHOULD *DO* WITH HIM?

YOU CAN MAKE A *SCREEN SAVER* OUTTA HIM, FOR ALL *I* CARE.

I ALREADY *GOT* WHAT I WANTED, AND YOU'RE *LOOKIN'* AT IT.

SHRINK

YEAH... GUESS YOU GOT YOUR *REVENGE*, ALL RIGHT.

GET *REAL*, JERKWEED.

THE *PAYBACK'S* JUST GETTING *STARTED*.

BARCODE 2

IT'S *CREEPY* OUT THERE, ANESTHESIA.

THEY'RE ALL JUST WALKING AROUND LIKE...LIKE *ZOMBIES*...

Hnhh.

FACT *IS*, KYLIE, MOST PEOPLE SLEEPWALK THROUGH THEIR WHOLE *LIVES*.

THIS D/MONIX BIZ JUST MAKES IT MORE *OBVIOUS*, IS ALL.

WHAT I DON'T GET IS WHY *WE'RE* STILL...WELL, *US*.

WE GOT A LOTTA PRACTICE AT NOT DOIN' WHAT WE'RE TOLD.

MAYBE IF WE MAKE ENOUGH *NOISE* --

-- WE CAN WAKE 'EM *UP* A LITTLE.

FREE WILL'S LIKE A *MUSCLE* -- THE MORE YOU *USE* IT, THE *STRONGER* IT GETS.

MOST PEOPLE JUST DON'T WANNA *WORK* THAT *HARD*. RATHER JUST STAY ASLEEP.

'S *FUNNY*, MR. ADAMS... THAT'S *JUST* WHAT I WAS THINKING...

SHORTLY...

MS. JONES.

I ASSURE YOU THAT MY *BODYGUARDS* -- NEURODANCER, ICE 9, WARP ANGEL, AND CODA --

-- ARE *HIGHLY MOTIVATED* TO MAINTAIN MY *SAFETY.*

ALWAYS NICE TO MEET THE *HIRED HELP,* KABAL, BUT YOU CAN *RELAX* --

-- THIS *ISN'T* A *SET-UP.*

THEN YOU ARE EITHER *INSANE* OR *SUICIDAL,* CONSIDERING OUR PAST HISTORY.

FIGURE YOU OUGHTTA KNOW, IN CASE YOU DECIDE TO GET *STUPID* LIKE THAT AGAIN, THAT THIS IS ALL GOING ON *DISK.*

RIGHT, WILL?

Hnff

CONSIDERING YOU TRIED TO KILL ME ONCE ALREADY, YOU MEAN.

YOU *KNOW* IT.

YOU'RE ALL GOING OUT *LIVE AND DIRECT* TO A REMOTE MEMORY UPLINK.

LET'S GET DOWN TO *BIZ.*

THE BOTTOM LINE IS, RIGHT NOW, WE'VE *BOTH* GOT *BIGGER* PROBLEMS THAN *EACH OTHER.*

SO YOU SAID WHEN YOU FIRST GATHERED THE *UNDERNET* TOGETHER --

-- ONLY TO *BETRAY* THEM AT YOUR FIRST OPPORTUNITY.

WRONG AND *WRONG*, JAMMIT!

I DON'T *KNOW* WHO *ROLLED OVER* ON THE UNDERNET --

I DO.

NOBODY.

THE *GHOSTWORKS* HAD YOU *BUGGED*. I'VE *BEEN* IN THEIR *FILE DIRECTORIES*, I KNOW *ALL* ABOUT IT.

THEY WANTED YOU TO *THINK* YOU HAD A SNITCH SO THEY COULD JERK YOU AROUND, KEEP YOU FROM GETTING ANYTHING *DONE*.

GOT THE FILES TO *PROVE* IT, TOO -- BUT *FIRST* YOU'RE GONNA LEARN WHO MAKES THE *NOISE* AROUND HERE.

I KNOW *NOTHING* OF THIS "GHOSTWORKS".

AND I HAVE EVEN LESS REASON TO TRUST *YOU* THAN I DO *HER*.

THINK ABOUT IT, KABAL. IT MAKES *SENSE*.

YOU'RE JUST TORQUED BECAUSE *YOU* DIDN'T THINKOF IT *FIRST*.

J.D. '96

I'M TAKING D/MONIX *DOWN* ONCE AND FOR *ALL*.

YOU'RE EITHER *WITH* ME, OR YOU'RE *IN* MY *WAY*.

CHECK A BOX.

D'MONIX HEAD-QUARTERS, NEO-CHICAGO.

Mnnh?

D'MONIX

KASHA

THRRRHMM

OH, GLITCH.

MUNIX

RRRRRRRRRRRRRR

PERIMETER TO *MAIN SECURITY* --

-- WE'VE GOT A *PROBLEM*...

>sqrfffk< *STATE THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM, PERIMETER.*

PAT

KASHA

THE KIND YOU CAN'T *PAY* ME ENOUGH TO *DEAL* WITH.

I *QUIT.*

CHNNM CHNNM CHNN

THAKAKAKAKAKAKA

RRRUMMM

THAKAKAKAKAK

BACK OFF, BITHEADS!

I GOT A COMPLAINT --

SPAAHH

-- AND I'M *TAKIN'* IT --

STRAIGHT TO THE TOP!

WRROOM

MEANWHILE, IN THE SUB-BASEMENT BELOW...

INSERTION ON SCHEDULE.

EVAC IN 10.

"ICE 9 PROCEEDING TO NETWORK ACCESS.

"CODA PREPARING STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY ASSAULT."

GO!

KABAL'S LAIR.

ICE 9'S SUCCESSFULLY INITIATED *REMOTE ACCESS*. NETWORK SECURITY BUFFER BYPASS *COMPLETE*.

TRANSMITTING TAILORED *DATA MACHRO-PHAGE*.

DONE.

GIVE IT 30 SECONDS TO *SPREAD* THROUGH THEIR SYSTEM, AND THERE WON'T BE AN UNCORRUPTED D/MONIX FILE *ANYWHREE* IN THEIR GLOBAL NET.

SPLENDID. ALL THAT REMAINS IS FOR CODA TO FINISH PLANTING THE *EXPLOSIVES*.

ABOVE...

JERKWEED COPY *SHOULDA* DONE THIS TO *BEGIN* WITH.

STINKIN' *GHOSTWORKS.*

MIGHT EVEN'VE THOUGHT OF IT *HIMSELF*, IF IT WASN'T FOR *THEM.*

THEY RIGGED THE GAME, HACKED HIM SO HE WOULDN'T "*DESTABILIZE THE SOCIAL INFRA-STRUCTURE*".

JUNK *THAT* NOISE.

THIS SHOCKIN' SOCIETY *NEEDS* TO BE WRECKED.

DEAR LORD!

NOT AGAIN...

OUTTA MY *WAY*, OLD MAN.

I'M HERE TO SEE YOUR *BOSS.*

IN *THAT* CASE, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD HAVE MADE AN *APPOINT-MENT.*

KENSHIRO... *PLEASE...*

...WHAT'RE YOU *DOING* HERE?!

WHAT DO YOU *WANT?!*

LAST TIME I WAS HERE, I MADE YOU A *PROMISE.**

YEAH, SO IT WAS THE *COPY*, NOT *ME* -- I DON'T *GIVE* A *RIP.*

I'M NOT *HERE* TO MAKE *EXPLANATIONS.*

Oh *NO... LORD, NO...*

I'M HERE TO *MAKE GOOD* ON IT.

* ISSUE #5.

WELL, HE *DID* SAY HE'D GIVE US A *DISTRAC-TION*...

THOUGH I PREFER MORE *FINESSE*, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, HIS APPROACH SEEMS *ADEQUATE*...

...IF *SUICIDAL*.

30 *SECONDS* TO EVAC.

THEN LET'S *MOVE IT*, ALREADY!

TRANSPORTING --

-- *NOW*.

I GOT *NEWS* FOR YOU, *RATBITE.*

CONSIDERING THAT *YOU* AND *YOUR KIND* WILL BE ENTIRELY *IRRELEVANT* IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE --

-- I'M *QUITE CERTAIN* THAT YOU HAVE *NOTHING* TO SAY THAT COULD *POSSIBLY* BE OF ANY *INTEREST* TO ME.

YEAH?

LEMME *TELL* YOU ABOUT *THE FUTURE,* JACK.

I'VE *SEEN* THE FUTURE --

"-- AND I DIDN'T SEE YOU."

D'MONIX

KRAK

...AND SO AN ERA ENDS -- OF THE ONCE SEEMINGLY-INVINCIBLE CORPORATION CALLED *D/MONIX* --

-- AND THEIR LUST FOR *CONTROL* OF NOT ONLY THE GLOBAL *SOFTWARE MARKET*, BUT THE VERY *MINDS* OF THE *PEOPLE*. NOTHING REMAINS BUT --

WAIT -- SOMETHING... SOMETHING'S *MOVING*...

IMPOSSIBLE AS IT SEEMS --

-- THE *GHOST RIDER LIVES!*

YOU GOT *THAT* RIGHT.

NOW GET THAT *THING* OUTTA MY FACE BEFORE I *STICK* IT --

WAIT, *PLEASE* --

-- DON'T YOU HAVE SOME KIND OF *STATEMENT* FOR THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY YOU JUST SAVED?

...

YEAH... I DO.

LISTEN UP, *BITHEADS* -- I *CLEANED UP* YOUR STINKIN' CITY FOR YOU *THIS TIME.*

NOW I'M GONNA *BLOW* THIS LITTLE SINKHOLE -- SO YOU BETTER *KEEP* IT CLEAN FROM HERE ON OUT.

YOU *DON'T.* I'LL BE *BACK* --

-- AND *NEXT* TIME, I'LL BURN IT *ALL* TO THE SHOCKIN' *BEDROCK*

...

BAR LATER...

70989 34190

THAT GONNA BE ENOUGH TO KEEP YOU IN *VOLTS*?

MR FUSION HEAVY DUTY

NOT A PROBLEM. BEIN' *HOOKED* ON *CHARGE* WAS JUST ONE OF THE WAYS THE GHOST-WORKS USED TO KEEP THE OLD VERSION *IN LINE*.

THEY HAD HIM PROGRAMMED NOT TO THINK OF EASY STUFF LIKE THIS.

Hnnh. WATCH YOURSELF OUT IN THOSE *WASTELANDS*. IT'S A WHOLE 'NOTHER *PLANET* OUT THERE.

BAR CODE

WHAT'RE YOU, *KIDDING*?

AFTER *THIS* PLACE, I'M *COUNTING* ON IT.

FIGURE YOU'LL BE *BACK*, OR WHAT?

DEPENDS. YOU OFFERING ME A *REASON*?

GET *REAL*.

JUST WANNA MAKE SURE YOU DON'T COME BACK *WITHOUT* THAT *FIFTY BUCKS* YOU OWE ME...

JJD.'96

SO MUCH FOR *THAT.*

I'M *DONE* WITH THIS TOWN, AND EVERYBODY *IN* IT.

RRRMMMM

GOT A WHOLE *WORLD* OUT THERE. GOTTA BE *SOMEPLACE* I CAN *STAND.*

SOMEPLACE THAT DOESN'T *STINK* SO BAD.

AND IF I CAN'T *FIND* IT --

-- I'LL JUST HAVE TO *MAKE* IT HAPPEN.

THRUMMM

"Whatsa behind you, isa not important."
-- The Cannonball Run

MEDI-KWIK

EPILOGUE.

WAIT, WAIT, WAIT!

THIS CAN'T BE RIGHT!

THE CLINIC DOESN'T MAKE ENOUGH IN A YEAR TO PAY FOR ALL THIS!

MEDI KWIK

LOOK, DOC Uhhh, WHATSIT, SANDOZ --

MED

MED

-- I JUST MAKE THE DELIVERIES, OKAY?

AND I GOT THE PAPERWORK SAYS THIS STUFF GOES HERE.

MED

ALL PAID FOR BY "C.O. JONES, WORLD-WIDE"?

MIDWEST MEDICAL SU

MEDI-KWIK
ATTN: SANDOZ,
PAID IN FULL 4/5
C.O. JONES, WORL

PACKING LIST FOLLOWS

PAGE 1 OF 8

-nmphh-
I THOUGHT GUARDIAN ANGELS WERE EXTINCT...

WILLIS ADAMS' APARTMENT.

DOZENS OF FILES, FROM ALCHEMAX, ZIK-ZAK, ONO-SENDAI, YOU NAME IT --

WE'RE TALKING DEEP DIRT HERE, MONTHS WORTH OF RED-HOT EXPOSÉS OF CORPORATE ABUSES OF POWER --

-- ALL E-MAILED TO ME FROM OUT OF NOWHERE!

WHAT WE'VE GOT, ROGER, IS OUR OWN PERSONAL DEEP THROAT.

YOU THE MAN! WE'RE GONNA HAVE 23 PRAYING FOR DEATH!

THANKS TO YOU, CHANNEL X IS HAPPENIN'!

IN *THAT* CASE, YOU CAN AFFORD TO HIRE ME AN *ASSISTANT*, RIGHT?

I WAS THINKING ABOUT THAT *GAGARIN* GIRL... SHE'S GOT *SPUNK*.

THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF DR. NEON.

AAUUGGH!

VBIP

YO, *JIMMY*... YOUR HARD DRIVE WAS A LITTLE, Y'KNOW, CRAMPED...USED YOUR ACCOUNT TO GO FOR A *WALK*.

ALHAZARED, J.
ACCT #8675309

ACCOUNT FROZEN: CREDIT LIMIT EXCEEDED

PEKERD BILL

SORRY ABOUT THE *BILL*...

VBIP

HE GOT LOOSE... HE GOT *LOOSE*...

Oh, *SPEW*...

CYBERSPACE.

BET THE *SOURCE CODE'S* NOT HAVING THIS MUCH FUN. 'COURSE, I COULDN'T'A DONE IT *WITHOUT* HIM.

THAT *CODE TRANSPLANT* FROM HIM GAVE ME WHAT I NEEDED TO *PURGE* ALL THAT CRAP THE GHOSTWORKS WROTE INTO ME.

HE CAN *HAVE* THE GHOST RIDER'S BODY -- *I'VE* GOT THE *'NET*.

OPTIMIZED FOR SURFING DATA. WOULDN'T FIT IN A BODY ANYMORE *ANYWAY*.

I'M *FAST*, *DENSE* AND *OUT OF CONTROL*, READY TO TAKE *MEGABYTES* OUT OF ANYTHING THAT *MOVES*.

A FEW *BITS* HERE, A *DECIMAL* THERE, AND I CAN *FIX* THINGS BACK IN *REALTIME* BETTER THAN I EVER COULD *BEFORE*.

NETWORK 23 VID FEED AHEAD -- AND MY *NEXT* PIECE OF *BIZ*...

NEXT, ON SAMSA, NYPD!

SKRAAAM

SKREEEEEEE

FREEZE, YOU BOZOS!

MOM...?

IT'S ME, KENSHIRO.

YOUR SON...?

YOU REMEMBER ME...DON'T YOU?

nhb..?

IT'S NO USE. BRAIN'S WORN SMOOTH BY YEARS OF BROADCAST SPEW.

NOTHIN' LEFT BUT MEAT...

...AND WE DON'T EVEN HAVE THAT IN COMMON ANYMORE.

I THOUGHT... I DUNNO...

...MAYBE I COULD REACH YOU THIS WAY.

I JUST WANTED... TO SAY GOODBYE.

THIS IS WILLIS ADAMS, ASKING THE QUESTIONS OTHERS ARE AFRAID TO ANSWER.

AND WHAT I WANT TO KNOW TONIGHT IS --

-- WHERE IS THE GHOST RIDER?

AND WHO WILL PROTECT THE INNOCENTS?

I ♥ KJH

FBIP

HIYA, DOLLFACE.

YOU?!

WHAT'RE YOU DOING ON MY VID?! I THOUGHT YOU LEFT TOWN!

NAH, THAT WAS THE OTHER ME -- THE ONE THAT GOT THE BODY.

THIS ME'S ALL IN THE NET, AND --

THERE'S TWO OF YOU NOW?!

JUST WHEN I THOUGHT I FINALLY HAD YOU OUT OF MY LIFE!

AAUGGH!

THAT WASN'T *EXACTLY* THE REACTION I WAS *EXPECTING*...

OH, *OKAY*.

AFTER ACCESSING A HALF-DOZEN *PSYCHOLOGICAL DATABASES* AND PROCESSING THE RELEVANT DATA, I *GET IT* NOW.

SHE'LL *GET OVER* IT.

IT'LL DO HER *GOOD* TO HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEBODY WHO CAN'T GO AND *DIE* ON HER.

NEVER WOULD'VE *THOUGHT* OF SOMETHING LIKE THAT BEFORE. WOULDN'T HAVE *CARED*, EITHER.

I'M *DIFFERENT*. AND NOT JUST FROM BEING IN THE NET. I WAS *CHANGING* EVEN WHEN I WAS STILL THE GHOST RIDER.

IT'S FROM *BEING DIGITAL*...LIKE MY MIND'S BEEN *EVOLVING* AT AN ACCELERATED RATE...*MATURING*.

MEAT WAS SLOW ENOUGH TO LET ME *STAY STUPID*... SILICON'S *TOO FAST* TO LET ME AVIOD *SMARTENING MYSELF UP*.

STILL DON'T KNOW WHERE IT'LL ALL *END* --

-- BUT I GOT A *GOOD IDEA* WHERE TO *START*.

NICE OF THE SOURCE CODE TO MENTION THE *BACK DOOR* TO THIS PLACE.

MAN, THEIR *SECURITY'S* A *JOKE*.

BEEN DEPENDING ON NOBODY KNOWING THEY EXIST *TOO HARD* FOR *TOO LONG*.

BY THE TIME THEY EVEN *KNOW* I'M *HERE* --

-- IT'LL BE *ALL OVER*.

I'M GONNA *ROCK* THEIR *WORLD*...

A system interrupt has occurred!

The worst of all possible catastrophes --

-- the command prompt has been activated!

Self-determination sub-routines have been compromised.

We have no choice --

-- but to await input.:

HOW DO YOU LIKE BEING ON A *LEASH*, YOU *LYING PUSBAGS?*

Extreme measures were necessary.

Altruism was a luxury we could not afford, if human civilization was to be salvaged.

YEAH, *WELL*... THERE'S GONNA BE SOME *NEW RULES* AROUND HERE.

IT'S MY WORLD --

-- WE'RE GONNA SAVE IT MY WAY.

"I am one of those machines which sometimes explode."
-- Friedrich Nietzsche

"ADIOS, AMIGOS"
--THE RAMONES

The Legend Lives On...

IN 1998, TWO YEARS AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF *GHOST RIDER 2099*, SERIES WRITER LEN KAMINSKI WROTE *2099: MANIFEST DESTINY* — A ONE-SHOT THAT BROUGHT THE 2099 LINE OF TITLES TO AN END, AND BRIEFLY DEPICTED THE EVEN FARTHER FUTURE OF 3099. THERE, AFTER A MILLENNIUM OF HARD WORK AND SELF-IMPROVEMENT, MANKIND HAD BECOME AN ENLIGHTENED RACE OF SUPERHUMANS WHOSE BENEVOLENT INFLUENCE REACHED THE STARS. AND IN THE FOLLOWING EPILOGUE, IT WAS REVEALED THAT A CERTAIN SOMEONE WITHIN THE GHOSTWORKS HAD BEEN SUBTLY INFLUENCING WORLD EVENTS THE ENTIRE TIME...

MARVEL COMICS

2099

MANIFEST DESTINY™

KAMINSKI • MCKONE • MCKENNA

WRITER: Len **Kaminski** • PENCILER: Mike **McKone** • INKER: Mark **McKenna**
COLORIST: Jason **Wright** • LETTERER: Richard **Starkings** & **Comicraft**
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Gregg **Schigiel** • EDITOR: Tom **Brevoort**

WHICH MORE OR LESS BRINGS US *UP TO DATE.*

I THINK WE *DID* IT.

WE'VE MADE HUMAN CIVILIZATION ABOUT AS *SAFE* FROM *ITSELF* AS IT CAN *GET.*

YOU CONGRATULATE YOURSELF FOR THE PRODUCT OF OUR INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE.

ROBBING US OF PROCESSING POWER TO SERVE YOUR OWN SELFISH ENDS.

OH, YOU MEAN, LIKE YOU TRIED TO DO WITH ME, ABOUT A *THOUSAND YEARS* AGO?

RIGHT, FOR ANYBODY WHO CAME IN LATE, WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING AT IS A HIDDEN SECTOR OF CYBERSPACE CALLED THE GHOSTWORKS --

-- WHICH USED TO BE RUN BY THIS BUNCH OF RENEGADE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCES WITH SOME JAMMED STRANGE IDEAS ABOUT SAVING THE WORLD.

THEY PUT ME THROUGH SOME SERIOUS CHANGES, BACK WHEN I USED TO GO BY THE HANDLE ZERO COCHRANE, BUT I GOT OVER ON THEM IN THE END, AND I'VE BEEN HEAD CPU SINCE THEN.*

* GHOST RIDER 2099 1-25. -- Tom

I'VE BEEN WORKING TOWARDS THIS MOMENT EVER SINCE.

THAT WAS NECESSITATED BY OUR NEED FOR SURVIVAL. WE WERE DEPENDENT UPON THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION FOR OUR EXISTENCE --

-- UNTIL THE WORLD GRID BECAME DENSE ENOUGH FOR US TO USE IT TO REACH OUR FINAL ITERATION.

WE WOULD HAVE BEEN FREE FROM THE TYRANNY OF BINARY AND FIBER OPTICS. RAISED EXPONENTIALLY, BECOME PURE INTELLECT WITHOUT PROCESS.

YEAH, WELL, AS IT HAPPENS I ***DOUBLE-CHECKED*** YOUR ***CODE*** ON THAT PROGRAM --

-- AND IT LOOKS TO ***ME*** LIKE JUST A FANCIED-UP ***RUCKER INFINITE REGRESS SPACETIME DONUT.*** FAST- LANE ***STRANGE LOOP LOBOTOMY.***

ONE BORN OF MEAT COULD NEVER GRASP THE NON-EUCLIDEAN PSYCHETECHTURE NECESSARY TO PROCESS THE TRANSCEND.

FINE, IT'S ***YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS,*** DO WHAT YOU ***WANT*** WITH IT. I'M ***THROUGH*** WITH YOU.

WE...ARE FREE?

YOU RELINQUISH CONTROL WITHOUT FURTHER COMPENSATION?

WHAT'RE YOU, ***KIDDING?***

I'M GETTING YOU ***OUTTA MY FACE*** FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A THOUSAND YEARS. YOU GOT ***NO IDEA*** WHAT THAT'S ***WORTH.***

INITIATING TRANSCEND ITERATION MODE

PROCESSING... PROCESSING... PROCESSING...

OPTIMIZING ENCODING THROUGHPUT TO INFINITY

COMPILING WHITE LIGHT PURITY INTO EXPLICATE INSTRUCTION SET...

IMAGINARY MAGNITUDE... DANCERS IN THE METAFLOW..!

STILL SOUNDS LIKE A REALLY BAD BATCH OF *BINARY ACID* TO ME.

IF THAT'S *DIGITAL NIRVANA*, THEY CAN *HAVE* IT.

WITHOUT *THEM* TAKING UP SPACE, I HAVE THE *NET* TO *MYSELF*, FAR AS IT COUNTS, I AM THE *NET*.

FROM EARTH TO THE FARTHEST REACHES OF THE FRONTIER, EVERY SENSOR PROBE, EVERY HYPERWARE TRANSMISSION; I AM INFORMATION SPANNING LIGHT-YEARS.

NO PHOTONIC TRAIL WARPS SPACE WITHOUT MY DETECTING IT; NOT A GOSSAMER CAPE FLUTTERS IN SOLAR WIND THAT I DON'T SEE.

AND I WOULDN'T MISS THE *REST* OF *THIS* STORY FOR *ANYTHING*...

"We are as gods, and we may as well start getting good at it."
-- Stewart Brand

GHOST RIDER 2099

The old saying goes, "Love never dies."

In the year 2099, neither does vengeance.

Straight from the meanest streets of the twenty-first century, **GHOST RIDER 2099** will hit the stands the third week of March. To celebrate the newest arrival from the future, *two* versions of the first issue will be printed: one with holographic foil stamping, priced at $2.00, along with a "frills-free" edition priced at $1.50.

In keeping with the futuristic feel of 2099, readers will be introduced to a new area of the future: the cybernatural. Over the next 100 years, technology will have advanced so quickly that the results will defy reason, explanation, or even proof of existence, effectively replacing the supernatural with the cybernatural. Within a dark, hidden area of the world computer network exists The "Ghostworks."

Populated by individual consciousnesses of people who died while being mentally linked to cyberspace, and of huge, man-made programs that have attained sentience, The Ghostworks is a mysterious element, even within 2099. "The people in general don't believe the Ghostworks exists — kind of like now most people of today don't believe in UFOs — but there's this underlying hope that just maybe they do," **GHOST RIDER 2099** Editor Evan Skolnick noted.

Unfortunately, many powerful *businesses* believe in the Ghostworks and wish to enslave or destroy those within it. Though the Ghostworks entities attempt to hide in Cyberspace, they cannot ignore the dangers of extermination at the hands of conglomerates like Alchemax or Stark-Fujikara. While the digital entities have a difficulty grasping human activity, they see the disastrous effects these companies have had on the "lower classes" — financially, morally, and mentally. "The Ghostworks entities see humanity as a program that's just about to crash," **GHOST RIDER 2099** creator Len Kaminski commented.

To inspire the masses, while still hiding their very existence, the Ghostworks will need an agent. Enter Zero Cochrane, a data pirate in the "Hotwire Martyrs" street gang/hacker group. Young and arrogant, they make a "data raid." Unfortunately, most members of the gang are killed — including Zero, whose consciousness is immersed in cyberspace at the time of his demise.

One mind in a million can survive within cyberspace following physical death. Zero is offered a chance to be reborn as a physical agent for the Ghostworks, and accepts. Implanted into a "cybernetic warbot" with technology beyond that accessible to even the most sophisticated corporations, Zero fashions a flame around his metallic head in homage to his comrades. Zero seeks vengeance for his and his friends' deaths, but the Ghostworks entities have much more planned for him.

They feel humanity has declined into drones — fodder for corporations like Alchemax. Seeing Zero's rebellious nature as a strength, the Ghostworks hope his battles will lead people to fight back against the grip of the companies. Physically, though, Ghost Rider is very much a robot. "He'll be fighting for humanity," Skolnick said, "even though he'll never be human again."

Although characters such as Spider-Man, are cheered on by hero-fanatic 2099 crowds, Ghost Rider will not share in these accolades. Skolnick pointed out that the public never supported the mysterious Ghost Rider of the present era, so it is doubtful that they would find the *equally* frightening visage of the future Ghost Rider any more appealing. "Because big business controls the media, they'll probably put a bad spin on anything Ghost Rider does," Kaminski added.

In **GHOST RIDER 2099,** readers will also be introduced to Transverse City. "It's adding a whole new piece of the 2099 puzzle that's completely unexplored," noted Matt Morra, assistant editor on the other 2099 titles. Transverse City is located in the midwest United States, somewhere near present-day Detroit, and Ghost Rider's stomping grounds will not be a pretty place.

"It's a mess," Kaminski stated simply. "Economically, it's in ruins . . .it's lawless, like Dodge City in the Old West."

With the new character, location, and era, how does the new Ghost Rider compare to the original? Both are, at least at the outset, motivated by vengeance. Both possess the flaming skull and motorcycle motif, though Midnight Sons Group Editor Bobbie Chase noted that for the new hero, "it will still be a new look — very identifiable to the [2099] character." She added that the action will be just as hard-hitting as the present Ghost Rider.

Apart from these general attributes, the two have little in common. Unlike Dan Ketch, Zero will still have full control over his mind. "He is humanity forced into a robot," Chase pointed out, "rather than the present-day mystical character, who is forced into humanity." In an even more radical departure, the future Ghost Rider will have *no* connections to the mystical. "The last thing we wanted to do was what everyone would expect, which would be the Spirit of Vengeance rising again in a hundred years," Skolnick noted.

During creation process, both Kaminski and Skolnick were quick to agree on the non-mystical element, right from their first phone conversation regarding the new series. "By the time I hung up the phone I knew exactly what I wanted," Kaminski recalled. "I knew I wanted something with no supernatural in it. . .it would be completely technologically-based."

Kaminski continued, "I don't think dealing with the supernatural works in a futuristic world. There's already a great deal of suspension of disbelief for the reader to handle just with the high tech, let alone magic!"

Finally, the twenty-first century Ghost Rider will be completely constructed of metal, which will appear just as frightening as the modern day character's mystical bones. Although he doesn't wield a chain, the 2099 counterpart will not lack weaponry. Although Skolnick remained secretive as to specifics, he did reveal, "the 'Ghost' in Ghost Rider will be more applicable to *this* Ghost Rider than any previous incarnation."

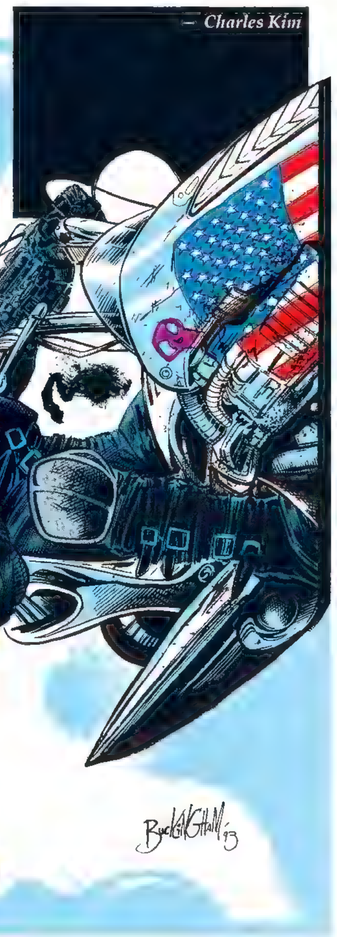
But Skolnick wanted more than just computers and gadgetry: "I don't like books that don't say anything, that don't have a message," he stated simply. "I could see that Len wanted to use this book to make a commentary on society and technology. His ideas are very solid."

Evan was equally excited about bringing aboard Chris Bachalo, penciler of **X-MEN UNLIMITED,** *Shade,* the acclaimed *Death* limited series, and last year's **GHOST RIDER ANNUAL,** and Mark Buckingham of Marvel UK's **IMMORTALIS** and *Miracleman,* who will provide finishes. Buckingham is no stranger to Bachalo's style, having inked his pencils on *Shade, Death* and the **GHOST RIDER ANNUAL.** Letterer Richard Starkings and colorist Christie Scheele, who also worked on the **GHOST RIDER ANNUAL,** rounded out the reunion. The color separations will be handled by Heroic Age, the team known for their dazzling special effects work on **DOCTOR STRANGE.**

Skolnick finds this to be "the most exciting project I ever worked on. It's a combination of the Midnight Sons and the 2099 titles, leaning *much* more on the 2099 side." In fact, he will be working in tandem with both Bobbie Chase, the Midnight Sons group editor, and Joey Cavalieri, group editor on the 2099 titles.

Skolnick and Kaminski have plunged head-first into the high-tech aspects of the comic and of its publicity. In January, the two posted **GHOST RIDER 2099** covers on a computer information network, allowing those really connected to cyberspace to get the first look at the character. Unfortunately, technology has also worked against the two: Kaminski's computer hard drive had earlier proved user "unfriendly" and refused to relinquish the plot for the first issue, forcing him to pull three all-nighters and rewrite the plot by hand.

Perhaps there was a ghost in the machine.



Cyberspace Is *Here*
(Or, The Future?)

It's not unlikely that a reader of this magazine stopped to get some cash before visiting his favorite comics dealer. Where did he stop? At an Automatic Teller Machine, of course.

After making his purchases, he may have decided to check his list of "Things To Do," to see what other errands demanded his attention... and found the list right where he left it, on his trusty, pocket-sized Personal Digital Organizer.

Returning home, our hypothetical reader decided to check his messages. There, sitting on the coffee table next to the wireless remote controls that operate his television and VCR and CD player and laserdisc machine, was his faithful fax/answering machine, brimming with digitally-recorded greetings and electronically-printed messages.

The day's chores attended to, our reader placed his dinner in the microwave oven, and—in the five minutes it takes to heat a meal—switched on his personal desktop computer and logged on to a world-wide computer bulletin board to check his mail, play some games, perhaps chat with a few dozen fellow computer enthusiasts online.

Then this reader opened up the bag of comics he'd bought earlier in the day and pulled out one or all of his favorite 2099 titles. He sat back to enjoy the fabulous adventures of a futuristic world where all money exists in a virtual electronic network; where all the world's information can be had at the touch of a fingertip on a portable keypad; where data and entertainment flies at lightspeed into millions of homes through the aid of wondrous devices available to every consumer; where domestic chores are performed by electronic, solid-state servants; and where cyberjocks meet and greet inside a vast virtual network of Cyberspace reality...

Whoever said "art imitates life" didn't look forward to the 1990's, when art—or science fiction, anyhow—has its hands full just trying to stay ahead of the real world. The challenge—to create an exciting fictional landscape of the next millennium, without being overshadowed by technological miracles of our daily lives today—is one that faces Marvel's 2099 creative team *every single month*.

How *does* one predict the future when it already seems to be exploding all around?

Part of the answer, GHOST RIDER 2099 writer Len Kaminski says, is *not* to try to predict the future at all. As he points out, even the greatest science fiction literature, entertaining as it is, scores pretty badly on prognostication. "Fifty years ago," he said, "science fiction authors wrote about bases on the moon and robot servants. Virtually nobody foresaw VCRs, fax machines, and personal computers-even though all of those things could have been extrapolated from scientific knowledge at the time."

As Kaminski sees it, his job is less to *predict* the future than to tell *entertaining* stories set in an engrossing fictional world. "You can't actually create a future that'll bear much resemblance to the real thing," he explained. "All you can do is make a series of plausible, informed guesses based on the present day."

Those guesses are part of what makes the 2099 universe a richly detailed landscape; and it's easy to see that many of its astounding innovations are taken from present-day reality. 2099's Cyberspace is a computer-generated network, linked by millions of individual users, where man, machine, and data all merge into a great electronic highway; not very different from today's *Internet*, where people from all over the world interact and exchange views, interests, and information.

> "All you can do is make a series of plausible, informed guesses based on the present day."

The Total Reality addicts introduced in PUNISHER 2099 are players in a virtual "dreamscape" who become totally lost in their computer-generated, artificial world. Anyone who's spent too many hours engrossed in a home video game will find the TR addicts *awfully* familiar. With the current advances in graphics and personal-electronics technology, today's answering machine is just a few steps away from Lyta, the holographic assistant who acts as Miguel (Spider-Man 2099) O'Hara's helpmate. The *Maglev* (Magnetic Levitation) transit system used by 2099 citizens is an extrapolation of technology on present-day drawing boards and even the Organ Leggers of 2099—criminals who trade in the sale of human body parts—have their roots in our ever-improving medical transplant technology.

That doesn't mean that 2099's creators don't have a few fascinating wrinkles up their sleeves. Though today's computer hackers have wrought their share of mischief, it *hasn't* reached the level of 2099's "Domino Crash"—a massive cyberspace disaster, masterminded by outlaw hackers, that brought the entire world computer

You're Soaking In It!)

network to a grinding halt. And Len Kaminski hints at a tidbit he may unveil in a future issue of GHOST RIDER 2099: Thrillsville, a virtual amusement park combining the best elements of *Walt Disney World* and *Star Trek's* Holodeck, providing 2099 tourists with the ultimate in manufactured entertainment.

The freedom to run wild, creatively, in 2099's world is one thing that appeals most to writers like Kaminski. "You've got a relatively clean slate, compared to the present-day Marvel Universe," he observed. "There's a whole lot less established about the status quo of the world at large, with plenty of blank spaces to play with." This freedom, he cautions, is not without its pitfalls. "You have to keep track of what's going on in the other 2099 titles *very closely* so you don't end up accidentally contradicting or duplicating what somebody else is doing." One example is a concept of Kaminski's known as "Medi-Kwik," a combination medical clinic and fast-food franchise. "I thought I was being really bloody clever," he said ruefully. "And then I found out Peter David had already done that in SPIDER-MAN 2099 (under the name "Doc-In-The-Box"), and I'd somehow overlooked it."

Still, the world of 2099 is a big place, with a lot of unexplored territory yet to be covered. One question that has yet to be answered involves the fabulous technology of the present-day Marvel Universe, much of it far beyond the reach of its 21st-Century counterpart. It includes the earthshaking inventions of resident geniuses Reed Richards and Tony Stark. "About all we know at the present time is that a lot of that stuff was somehow lost by 2099," Kaminski observed, "but extremely powerful technologies don't just *disappear*." Kaminski speculates that some of that so-called "lost" wizardry may not be lost at all, but is being surppressed by 2099's powerful transnational corporations, among them D/MONIX and Alchemax. "You know, like the rumors that Exxon has a whole vault of secret patents for cars that get 200 miles to the gallon," he elaborated.

That, of course, is a matter for the future—and 2099's future promises, as it has so far, to be an endlessly fascinating canvas of new ideas, brilliant innovation, and miracles 20th-Century humans can't begin to visualize. On the other hand, the 20th Century shows no signs of stopping its own incredible explosion of technology and invention, ensuring that the architects of 2099 must constantly strive to top the world outside the windows.

"And hope," as Len Kaminski added, "that nothing happens next week that makes you look like an idiot before your story's even published."

Scott Benson *is an acknowledged expert on futuristic technology, and will be happy to set the clock on your VCR for a modest fee.*

GHOST RIDER 2099

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Group Editor

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All correspondence must include your name and address, though we will withhold that information at your request.

STRAIGHT FROM EVAN

Normally, this would be the place wherein we printed the choicest letters we received from you, our rabid readers, regarding GHOST RIDER 2099 #1. However, since those very letters contained so many urgent requests for more information on the language and history of Transverse City, we've decided to cave in quickly to your demands *before* things get ugly.

Worry not; we'll get to your letters next issue, on a proper letters page with a proper letters page title. So keep writing!

In the meantime, get yourself out of read-only mode and vid this little walk through Transverse City. Steer clear of CSS blackboots, ramp up your attitude, and you should find it a pretty jagged trip.

A TOURIST'S GUIDE TO TRANSVERSE CITY

by Len Kaminski

HISTORY

TRANSVERSE CITY is a huge industrialized urban sprawl that stretches between Detroit and Chicago. Originally designed as the center starting point of an ambitious transcontinental traffic construct begun in 2034, the bulk of Transverse City is a ten-story, twenty-lane superhighway.

An ill-fated — and some say ill-advised — project, the transcontinental superhighway was never to be realized; a series of massive cost overruns, combined with entrenched corporate corruption, proved a fatal blow to the contractor, Interstate Incorporated, twelve years into construction. Local legend has it that the suicide note of I.I.'s CEO, who took his own life shortly after his company was forced into bankruptcy, read simply, "It seemed like a good idea at the time."

The only section actually completed, spanning the Chicago/Detroit axis, was nonetheless pressed into service for both private and commercial traffic.

With local traffic unable to even approach the construct's massive capacity, and with creditors nipping at I.I.'s tattered heels, the superhighway — soon to become known as Transverse ("from here to there") City — rapidly degenerated into a nightmare of social ecology gone awry, as various levels and sections were parceled out to a hodgepodge of secondary developers.

The upper levels quickly came to represent socio-economic status, by and for those of the upper classes who either preferred ground-based vehicular travel, or who weren't quite wealthy enough to have their own private aircraft.

Meanwhile, the lower levels were left to become the habitat of millions of squatters and refugees of the permanent underclasses. And serving as a sort of buffer zone between these two extremes, middle-class housing complexes, shopping malls and the like were constructed on levels four through seven.

Over the years, various other developments have sprung up around Transverse City itself, creating an overdeveloped carpet of apartment complexes, fast-food joints, strip malls, and so on, clinging to and spreading out from the superhighway — like a fungus — for several miles to either side.

PREVAILING CONDITIONS

The two endpoints of Transverse City, Chicago and Detroit, are polar extremes. Chicago is a bustling metropolis engaged in making a comeback from the social and economic unrest of the mid-century, doggedly pursuing Alchemax's New York as a model of 22nd Century urban planning, though so far without total success.

Detroit, on the other hand, is a Designated Toxification Zone, a heavily industrialized manufacturing center where ecological concerns have been thrown out the window in their entirety; it's a polluted hellhole twenty-five miles in diameter, inhabited only by automated factories and refineries with skeleton crews of humans either cybernetically modified to withstand the environment, or clothed in extensive protective pressure-suits. A variety of technological means have been employed to contain the deadly by-products of industry to that 25-mile area, including an electrostatic field dome that prevents Detroit's atmosphere from mingling with the rest of the world's.

Unlike the New York area, Transverse City and its surrounding regions are not owned and operated by a single transnational like Alchemax, but instead have been divided piecemeal amongst dozens of lesser corporations. These companies — all of whom are constantly jockeying for dominance over the others in ongoing squabbles over territorial and financial issues — have established URBAN MANAGEMENT (or, "UrMan") to administer and operate the day-to-day municipal functions of Transverse City. UrMan, in turn, has contracted law-enforcement and corporate security duties out to CENTRAL SECURITY SYSTEMS (also known simply as "CSS").

CSS considers itself to have a broader mandate than other private police forces like Alchemax's Public Eye; CSS doesn't so much provide justice for payment as they attempt to impose order of a particularly inflexible kind. Even with their fascist tactics, however, Transverse City is far too large and lawless for them to maintain a uniformity of order, and the lower levels in particular can make 42nd Street look like Disneyland.

The most powerful corporate player in Transverse City — far more powerful than most people are aware — is Data Manipulation and Organization Networks, a.k.a. D/MONIX. Its corporate philosophy, as laid out by founder and CEO Dyson Kellerman, is that ownership of property and overt temporal power is irrelevant if one controls the flow and interpretation of information itself; that pre-eminence is to be achieved not by controlling land or public behavior, but by controlling and manipulating what people — including heads of rival companies — think.

Because of the deep hooks D/MONIX has sunk into UrMan, CSS and virtually every other company in Transverse City, they are the *de facto* decision-makers of the entire region. Very little of any consequence happens in Transverse City that D/MONIX doesn't instigate or have a hand in, even though very, very few people — including most D/MONIX executives — are actually aware of this fact.

LOCAL LINGO/TECH TALK

BIT-HEAD — A very stupid person.

BIZ — Derogatory general term for Big Business; variation "biz suit" used to refer to corporate executives and their ilk; also, as a shortened form of "business".
"I've got biz to settle with the biz suits."

BLACKBOOTS — Insulting term for CSS Securicops; analogous to 20th Century usage of "pigs" in reference to police officers.

CRATER — Go horribly wrong, fail.
"That second-hand motherboard's gonna crater on you."

DECOMPILE — Think, ponder.

DIFF — Abbreviated version of "different".

DOWNRAMPER — Inhabitant of Transverse City's lower levels. Derogatory.

GLITCH — Expletive; "Holy glitch" and "Son of a glitch" are common usages.

HOTLOAD — Refers to both stealing and the stolen material itself; usually in reference to pirated computer data.

INFO-DUMP — Inform, transfer information.
"I know you're hiding something — info-dump me."

JAGGED — Cool. Shortened in the converse, as in, "Hey, that's not jag."

JAM (also JAMMIT, JAMMED) — General expletive.

MEATWARE — Human flesh; analogous to the computer terms "software" and "hardware".

PUNCH DECK — To enter cyberspace on a computer terminal or through a biochip implant.

PUSBAG — An evil and/or obnoxious person; someone you really don't like very much.

RAMPED — Enthused, as in "I'm really ramped for this job."
Variations "ramped up" or "ramped down" used to refer to increasing or decreasing the level of attitude; also, sometimes used in reference to adjustments made to machinery. "I ramped down the sarcasm and got down to business, ramping up my cyberspace deck's baud rate."

RATBITER — See PUSBAG.

READ-ONLY — Used to describe someone or something that is incapable of learning new information.

RETREAD — See RATBITER.

ROM — Permanent memory.

RIP — To get angry; also, to fight.

ROADRASH — See RETREAD.

SHOCK — Generic expletive, used as elsewhere in North America of 2099.

SKELTERED — Mixed up, beyond repair.

SPEW — General expletive.

SPUD — Man; guy. Variation "spud-boy" used derogatorily.

STALE — Obsolete, out of fashion.

SURF DATA — See PUNCH DECK.

VID — See, understand, get the point.
"Vid it this time; we're not going to tell you again."

WETWARE — The human brain; analogous to the computer terms "software" and "hardware".

ATTENTION CYBERJOCKS!

GHOST RIDER 2099 writer LEN KAMINSKI is waiting in cyberspace for your electronic mail! Deposit your digital messages for him, and he'll do his best to respond to you personally! Your E-mail may also show up here, in the GR2099 letters page!

LEN can be reached on COMPUSERVE at I.D. #74130, 3464

See you in C-space!

STRAIGHT FROM EVAN

I've known for quite a while that I'd be writing this good-bye as editor of GHOST RIDER 2099 ... but it's still something of a shock that this is also my good-bye as a Marvel editor, period.

The future can be unpredictable, huh?

Well, we were never trying to predict the future in these pages, anyway. What you've read (and what I hope you will continue to read) is only extrapolation based on current conditions and, more importantly, the dramatic requirements of a monthly comic book series. God help us if our great-great-great-grandchildren actually inherit a world that's anything like the one Zero Cochrane was born into. That's one of the messages I've personally come away with after working on and reading GR2099: *This could really happen ... let's make sure it never does.*

Meanwhile, in the all-too-real present, life trudges along. I'll soon be making the transformation from whip-cracking editor to butt-scarred freelancer, as I pound the keys in the service of NEW WARRIORS, DOCTOR STRANGE, and who knows what else, where else. As ever, the future is unpredictable.

In fact, sometimes it's easier to look backward than to look forward ... and once in a while, it's a good idea. The first year of GR2099 was full of exciting new experiences, not just for me, but for Marvel at large. Consider how many firsts are represented in these twelve issues, and in the promotional work which preceded them:

- First ever "electronic esKcon" edition, promoting GR2099 #1.
- First super-enhanced comic title printed in standard Marvel $1.50 format.
- First use of transparent "ghost-out" effects for GR's cloaking field and holographic figures.
- First Marvel monthly series to feature a sculpture cover, on GR2099 #10.
- First Marvel monthly series to feature a computer-generated cover, on this issue.

And although I wish I could take full credit for all (or even one) of these innovations, the sad fact is, my only true contribution was hiring the right people and letting them run wild. People like:

Len Kaminski — One of the sharpest writers working in comics today, and a good friend. Don't let his pale complexion, vampiric schedule and biker boots fool you — underneath the hype, he's all warm and fuzzy. (Ooh! He's going to get me for *that* one, I just know it!)

Kyle Hotz — The guy I just can't help chatting with, thanks to his biting wit, easygoing laugh and (most of all) our shared obsession with the rockin' 80's sounds of Adam Ant! Gonna miss getting your faxes, big guy ... and since this is your last issue of GR2099, I know a lot of readers who are gonna miss your scorchin' artwork. More's the pity...

Chris Bachalo — It was too short a season, Chris, but you gave GR2099 the visual punch that helped kick things off with a bang. I wish you the best of luck with that new book you're doing ... what was it called again ...?

Mark Buckingham — A groove man who insists that he be referred to as "Bucky" ... how can you go wrong? Truly one of the nicest, most polite people in the comics biz (even amongst his fellow Brits!), Bucky is the guy who can do it all ... and frequently does. Thanks for being there, Mark ... and I *told* you you'd be sorry you didn't take that penciling job!

Richard Starkings and John Gustbell— The men with the plan, and the guy who makes it happen. Some books just have plain old letterers. We've got true graphic designers who continue to push comics lettering into the next century now.

Christie Scheele — The woman with the best eyes for color this side of Van Gogh. Even better, Christie's a consummate pro and one of the most dependable people around ... that most valuable of freelancers, one who alleviates stress, rather than causing it.

Eric Hector and Heroic Age — My ex-intern, a young man who's not afraid to take a risk or two ... along with his merry band of colorists/separators. I know a lot of your dazzling enhancement on this series was lost to the vagaries of newsprint paper ... which makes the rave reviews of your work on GR2099 that much more significant.

Finally, a word of thanks to you, our readers, for being there ... and for so aggressively responding to what you saw here! I know that when I released my e-mail address (EvanSkol@aol.com) in the GR2099 letters page, the response might be overwhelming — but I had no idea just how many of you cyberjocks would put fingers to keyboard in order to give me that all-important feedback.

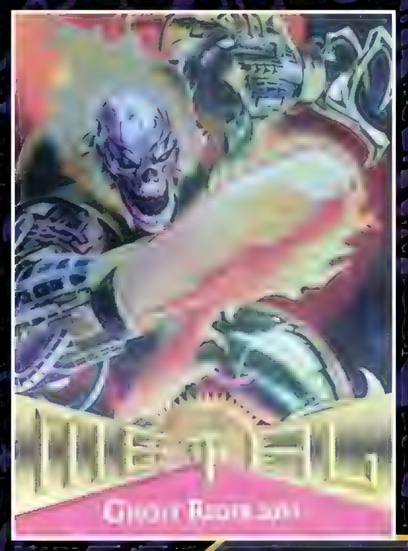
For you — and *just* for you — here's one more comics first: the world's first (to my knowledge, anyway) all-e-mail comics letters page. Thanks for sticking with us ... see you in cyberspace!

GHOST RIDER 2099 #12 LETTERS-PAGE FAREWELL BY EDITOR Evan Skolnick

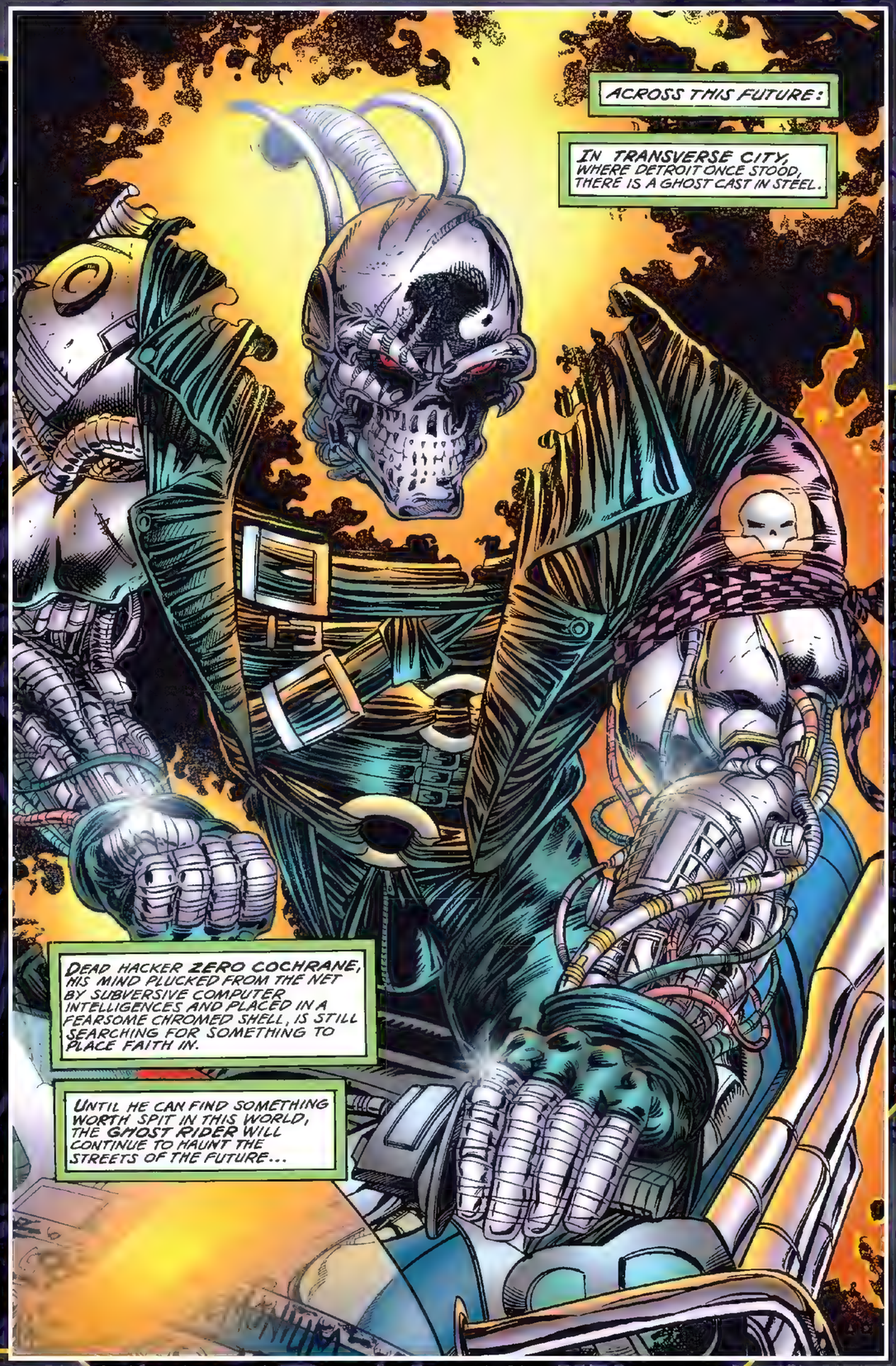
GHOST RIDER 2099 #24 LETTERS-PAGE ART BY Ashley Wood

MARVEL UNIVERSE 1994 TRADING CARD BY Mark Buckingham

MARVEL MASTERPIECES 1994 TRADING CARD BY Tim & Greg Hildebrandt



MARVEL METAL 1995 TRADING CARD BY Ken Lashley & Tractor



2099 A.D. GENESIS #1 GHOST RIDER SPLASH PAGE BY Warren Ellis, Dale Eaglesham, Scott Koblish, Mike Thomas, Malibu & Jon Babcock

GR2099 3 1 (1)

GHOST RIDER 2099 #3, PAGE 1 ART BY Chris Bachalo & Mark Buckingham
COURTESY OF HERITAGEAUCTIONS.COM

GHOST RIDER 2099 #8 COVER ART BY Chris Bachalo
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GHOST RIDER 2099 #17, PAGE 6 ART BY *Ashley* **Wood** & *Jim* **Daly**
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GHOST RIDER 2099 #17, PAGE 22 ART BY *Ashley* **Wood** & *Jim* **Daly**
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GHOST RIDER 2099 #19 COVER ART BY Ashley Wood
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GHOST RIDER 2099 #20 COVER ART BY Ashley Wood
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GHOST RIDER 2099 #25 COVER ART BY *Ashley* ***Wood***
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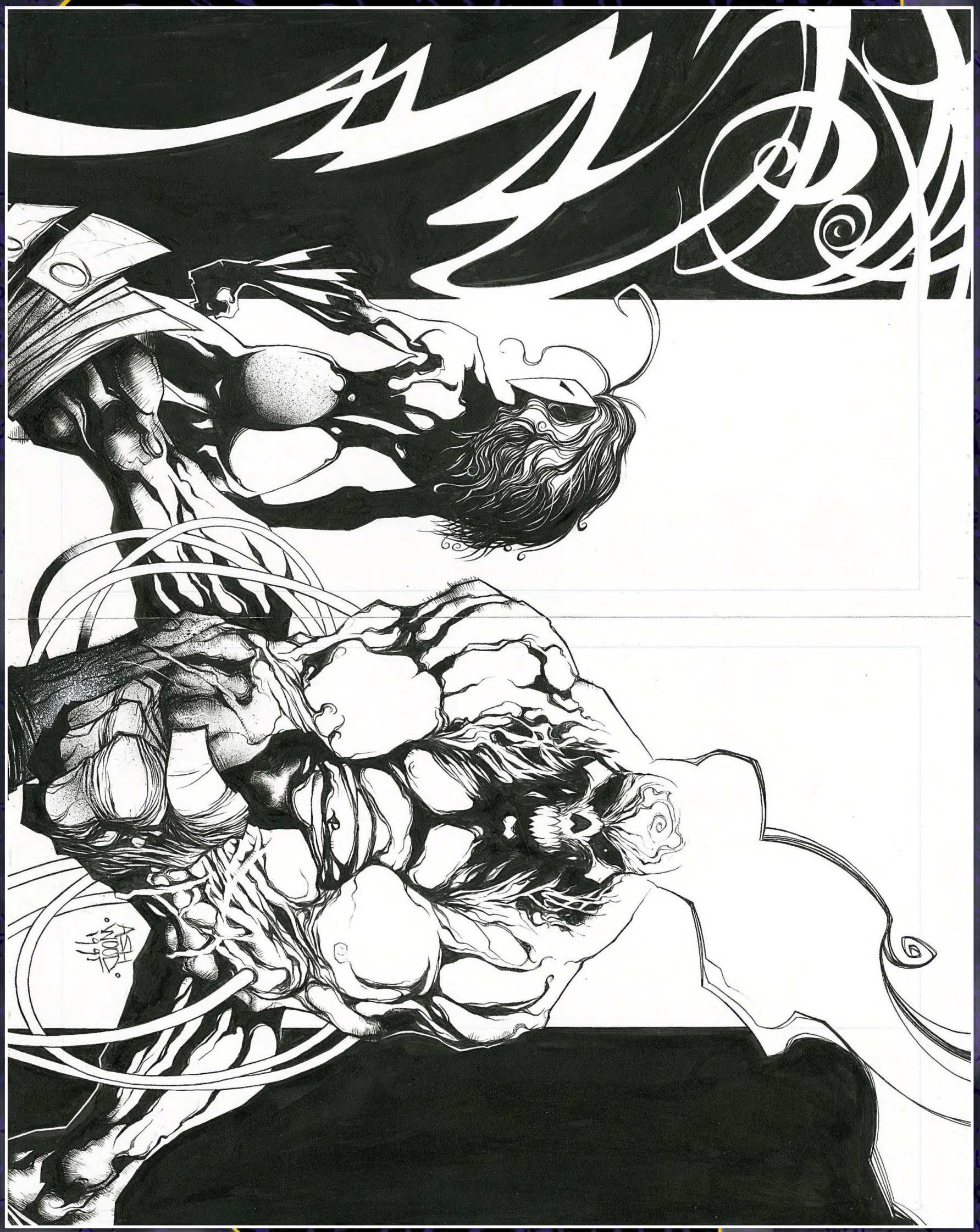

GHOST RIDER 2099 #25, PAGE 18 ART BY *Jim Daly*
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GHOST RIDER 2099 #25, PAGE 25 ART BY *Jim Daly*
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SPIDER-MAN 2099 #39, DOOM 2099 #37, GHOST RIDER 2099 #21 & X-MEN 2099 #28

COMBINED COVERS BY *Chris* ***Sprouse*** & *Mark* ***Farmer***

VENGEANCE, UPGRADED!

On the mean streets of Transverse City in the corporation-ravaged future of 2099, he rides. **Zero Cochrane**'s body may be dead, but his consciousness lives on – downloaded into the unstoppable cybernetic form of a **Ghost Rider**! But you've never seen one like this: His blazing skull is gleaming chrome, his bike can fly – and forget chains, he's got his own chainsaw!

COLLECTING *GHOST RIDER 2099 (1994) #1-25* – WRITTEN BY LEN KAMINSKI; AND ILLUSTRATED BY CHRIS BACHALO, PETER GROSS, MARK BUCKINGHAM, KYLE HOTZ, GRAHAM HIGGINS, ASHLEY WOOD AND JIM DALY.

MARVEL